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# Army of the Potomac

From

## 1861 to 1863

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An inside view of the history of the Army of the Potomac and its leaders as told in the official dispatches, reports and secret correspondence ; from the date of its organization under General George B. McClellan in 1861, until the superseding of General Hooker, and the assignment of General Meade to its command in 1863.

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By

**Samuel Livingston French**

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## INTRODUCTION

The following pages are a compilation of all the important official reports, dispatches, and correspondence, relating to the formation and movements of one of the largest, grandest, and most magnificent armies which the world had ever seen; and, of the actions of the principal actors in that momentous struggle in the life of the nation during the period from 1861 to 1863.

The process of research through the tangled mass of official records, and the method of their arrangement in chronological and narrative form necessarily involved a very great deal of time and labor, embracing as it does the records and correspondence of both the Union and Confederate armies, and forms a concise and accurate history of its movements during that eventful period, as it was recorded from day to day, in regular and consecutive order of events by the actors themselves.

No special attention has been given to the particular action or movements of individual army corps, divisions, brigades, or other military subdivisions, as such; the aim has been to treat the respective armies with their commanders, as distinct units, and from their own reports and correspondence, (much of which was secret and never heretofore published,) much light is thrown on acts and movements which have in many instances—maybe from their not being clearly understood,—been grossly misrepresented.

The reader will be enabled to form an absolutely unbiased and correct judgment regarding the purpose, the merits, the success or failure of the several commanders in the different campaigns, for out of their own

mouths will they be judged, and by their words and acts must they be weighed.

This story is an exhibit of intermingled loyalty, patriotism and undaunted courage; with imbecility, cowardice, jealousy and hate; which in their effects fell little short of treason.

It is submitted to the public as a just tribute to the memories of those who, through prejudice and misrepresentation, during the long years which have elapsed since the close of the rebellion, have been denied the plaudits unjustly accorded to others, to which their devoted and faithful services entitled them; or, peradventure, in cruel martyrdom, compelled to bear the odium of acts for which they were but convenient victims.

A just and grateful people will not permit the breath of calumny to dim the lustre, or belittle the actions of those devoted and unselfish men in their country's cause; nor can they forget the debt of gratitude they owe to those who, in the dark days of the country's peril bore its weighty burdens, and with almost superhuman courage, patience and perseverance, surmounting all difficulties and discouragements, stood like a wall of adamant in its defense.

Truth and justice will impartially award the honors, and the unerring hand of time will perpetuate the memories of those true and noble men to

“Wake in our breasts the living fires,  
The holy faith that warmed our sires.”

S. L. FRENCH.

Plymouth, Penna., March, 1905.

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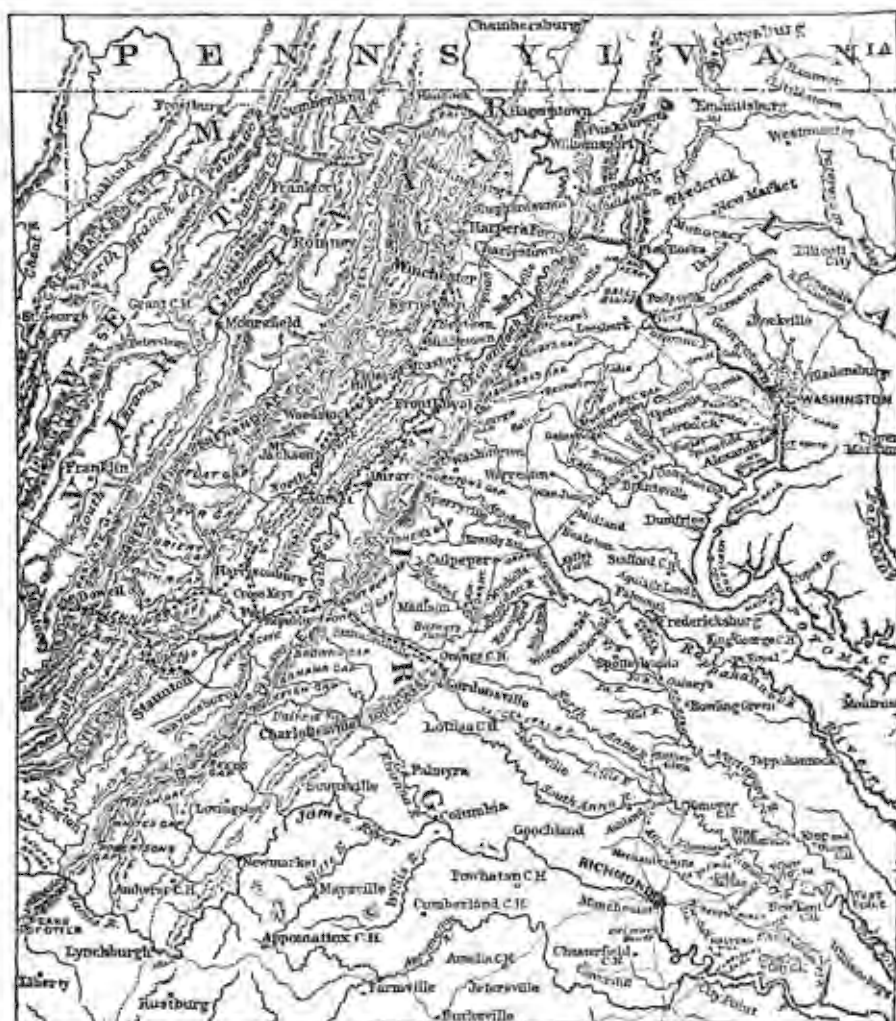
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MAP OF THE VIRGINIA CAMPAIGNS

## CHAPTER I

### MCCLELLAN'S CAMPAIGN ON THE PENINSULA

Beginning of the War of the Rebellion—The Call to Arms—Uprising of the North—Military enthusiasm—The rout at Bull Run—Appointment of General McClellan to the Command of the Army—His record—Protracted delays of preparations—Impatience of the public—The President's General War Order No. 1 for a general movement towards Manassas—McClellan dissents and argues in favor of the Peninsula—General War Orders Nos. 2 and 3 creating corps organizations and forbidding change of base without leaving Washington entirely secure—Reasons urged by McClellan for going to the Peninsula—Vacillation of McClellan—Council of War and adoption of McClellan's plan—The President's acquiescence—His peremptory order—"Move somewhere by some route"—The start down the Potomac—General Wadsworth's report—Troops left at Washington entirely inadequate for its defense—Report of Generals Thomas and Hitchcock—The orders of the President disobeyed—He orders McDowell's corps detained—Arrival at Yorktown—McClellan reports enemy in great force and formidable works—Pleads for Franklin's corps to be sent him—Complains of his numerical weakness—General Wood's statement—The President's statement and advice to break the enemy's line at once—McClellan reiterates his weakness and claims necessity of siege operations—Appeals for the First Corps to be sent him—The President's letter—McClellan's misstatements and evasion of orders pointed out—"You must act"—Strength of the army at time of disembarkation.

**O**N the 12th day of April 1861, the rebels opened fire in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, upon Fort Sumpter. Major Robert Anderson, its commander, after a spirited defense, surrendered the Fort two days later.

The news of this bombardment was almost electrical in its effect throughout the North. The opening gun was the spark to ignite the long suppressed but smouldering fires of that "irrepressible conflict," which, after a momentary and deathlike pause, suddenly burst forth with all the irresistible force and fury of a terrific explosion.

Business of all kinds came to a sudden halt; party lines, which had heretofore been so rigidly drawn were obliterated or forgotten, in the one general desire and determination to preserve the Union; and all thought and conversation was on the one topic, of stern and relentless war.

President Lincoln had promptly issued a call for 75,000 volunteers to serve for three months, to quell the insurrection and restore obedience to federal authority, and respect for the flag; the sound of martial music resounded throughout the land and recruiting offices were opened in every town and hamlet. In a very brief time the required quota's of troops had responded, and they were hurried forward to the defense of the national capital whose safety was being threatened.

The thrilling events of those exciting and eventful days, destined to be fraught with such momentous results in the history of the nation, were characterized by mingled feelings of intense indignation at the contemptuous insults offered to the country's flag, and of an uncontrollable impatience to avenge those indignities.

Enlistments had been made for ninety days only; the New York Tribune, published by Horace Greeley was foremost in the persistent demand for speedy action. "On to Richmond!" was the general cry, and crush the unholy rebellion.

Under such conditions and impulses, on the 21st day of July 1861, was fought the battle of Bull Run in Virginia, when the Union forces met with disaster, and were driven back upon Washington, a defeated and terror stricken mob.

Major General George B. McClellan, then a comparatively young man, who, some time previously had been commissioned by the Government to investigate and report on the condition of military affairs and manoeuvres,



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as conducted in European countries, was at this time in command of the Union forces in Western Virginia, where he had been quite successful in several minor engagements he had had with the enemy.

The experience which he had thus attained, combined with an undoubted natural ability, at once brought him into public view as a competent and proper officer to lead the army and retrieve the late disaster. Accordingly, on the day following that event, he was summoned to Washington and placed in command of the "Division of the Potomac," which comprised all the troops at the time in and around Washington.

He assumed command on the 27th day of July, six days after the battle of Bull Run, and immediately proceeded to the organization of that magnificent army which thereafter was known as the "Army of the Potomac."

Under the call of the President for 300,000 volunteers to be enlisted for the period of three years, troops were rapidly forwarded to Washington and stationed in camps around and about the city, there to undergo the instruction and discipline necessary to equip them for the performance of the arduous duties they were destined to undergo.

The beautiful days of those early fall and winter months having been thus busily occupied, public sentiment meanwhile constantly growing more impatient at the procrastinated delays of a forward movement; on the 27th day of January 1862, precisely six months from the day General McClellan took command, President Lincoln, in obedience to the general public desire, issued the following peremptory "General War Order, No. 1," to wit:

"Ordered, That the 22d day of February, 1862, be the day for a general movement of the land and naval forces of the United States, against the insurgent forces.

That especially the army at and about Fortress Mon-

roe; the Army of the Potomac; the Army of Western Virginia . . . be ready to move on that day. . . .

That the heads of departments, and especially the Secretaries of War and of the Navy, with all their subordinates, and the General-in-Chief, with all other commanders and subordinates of land and naval forces, will severally be held to their strict and full responsibilities for prompt execution of this order."

Four days later—on the 31st day of January—the President supplemented this order with "Special War Order No. 1," as follows:

"Ordered, That all the disposable force of the Army of the Potomac, after providing safely for the defense of Washington, be formed into an expedition for the immediate object of seizing and occupying a point upon the railroad southwestward of what is known as Manassas Junction . . . and the expedition to move before or on the 22d day of February next."

To the execution of this movement in the direction of Manassas, General McClellan interposed objections, and in a lengthy communication under date of February 3d, addressed to the Secretary of War, he argued in favor of a movement down the Potomac to the Chesapeake Bay and thence up the Peninsula to Richmond, making Fortress Monroe, or the Lower Chesapeake Bay his base.

He predicted by this plan of operations the most brilliant results, and regarded success thereby as certain. Many verbal conferences thereon ensued, involving delay in the execution of the Presidents War Order No. 1, until finally, on the 8th day of March, 1862, the President issued his "General War Orders Nos. 2 and 3.

War Order No. 2, was as follows:

"Ordered 1. That the Major General commanding the Army of the Potomac proceed forthwith to organize that part of the said army destined to enter upon active oper-

ations (including the reserve, but excluding the troops to be left in the fortifications about Washington) into four army corps, to be commanded according to seniority of rank as follows:

“First Corps to consist of four divisions, and to be commanded by Major General I. McDowell.

Second Corps to consist of three divisions, and to be commanded by Brig. General E. V. Sumner.

Third Corps to consist of three divisions, and to be commanded by Brig. General S. P. Heintzelman.

Fourth Corps to consist of three divisions, and to be commanded by Brig. General E. D. Keyes.

The forces left for the defense of Washington will be placed in command of Brig. General James S. Wadsworth who shall also be military governor of the District of Columbia. That this order be executed with such promptness and dispatch as not to delay the commencement of the operations already directed to be undertaken by the Army of the Potomac. A Fifth Army Corps to be commanded by Major General N. P. Banks, will be formed from his own and General Shields' (late General Land-er's) divisions.”

The President's General War Order No. 3:

“Ordered, That no change of base of operations of the Army of the Potomac shall be made without leaving in and about Washington such a force as in the opinion of the General-in-Chief and the commanders of all the army corps, shall leave said city entirely secure.

That no more than two army corps, (about 50,000 troops) of said Army of the Potomac shall be moved en-route for a new base of operations until the navigation of the Potomac from Washington to the Chesapeake Bay shall be freed from the enemy's batteries and other obstructions, or until the President shall hereafter give express permission.

That any movement as aforesaid en-route for a new base of operations which may be ordered by the General-in-Chief, and which may be intended to move upon Chesapeake Bay, shall begin to move upon the bay as early as the 18th of March instant, and the General-in-Chief shall be responsible that it move as early as that day. . . .”

One of the material reasons urged by General McClellan in his letter of February 3d, to the Secretary of War against the adoption, or execution, of the plans of the President was, the “unprecedented and impassable condition of the roads,” which he described as being “as bad as they well could be,” while in the plan suggested by himself, they “are passable at all seasons of the year,” and, “the country alluded to (the Peninsula), is much more favorable for offensive operations than that in front of Washington which is very unfavorable.”

In the foregoing orders of the President it will be observed, that while the route as suggested by General McClellan, although not specifically accepted, appeared to be under contemplation as the one which would be finally adopted and followed, and the conditions enjoined, before any change of base should be made, were:

1st. That a force sufficiently large should be left at the capital as to “leave it entirely secure”; the strength of which force was to be determined by the opinions of “All the corps commanders and the General-in-Chief.”

2d. Doubtless to insure this provision for the safety of the capital, “no more than two army corps should join in the movement until after navigation on the Potomac had been rendered entirely secure against interruption from rebel batteries;” while special stress was given to the precise date on which the movement should begin.

Notwithstanding these explicit and peremptory orders of the President, and the extreme solicitude on the part of General McClellan for the acceptance of his plan of

operations, he states in his subsequent report: "On Sunday the 9th of March, (the day after the President's War Order No. 3 was issued) information from various sources made it apparent the enemy was evacuating his positions at Centreville and Manassas as well as on the Upper and Lower Potomac. . . .I therefore issued orders during the night of the 9th of March, for a general movement of the army the next morning towards Centreville and Manassas, sending in advance two regiments of cavalry under Col. Averell, with orders to reach Manassas if possible, ascertain the exact condition of affairs, and do whatever he could to retard and annoy the enemy if really in retreat."

On the same date he sent the following telegram to the Secretary of War: "In the arrangements for the advance to-morrow it is impossible to carry into effect the arrangements for the formation of Army Corps. . . . I respectfully ask a suspension of the order directing it till the present movement be over."

To this request the Secretary immediately replied: "I think it is the duty of every officer to obey the President's orders, nor can I see any reason why you should not obey them in present instance. I must therefore decline to suspend them."

On the 13th of March, a council of war was held at the "Headquarters of the Army of the Potomac at Fairfax Court House, Virginia," at which council there were present besides the commander-in-chief, the generals commanding the several army corps.

At this council, the President's War Order No. 3, of March 8, was considered, and in the "memorandum" of their proceedings, among other things, it was the "unanimous opinion, that the enemy having retreated from Manassas to Gordonsville, . . . it is the opinion of the generals commanding army corps that the operations to

be carried on will be best undertaken from Old Point Comfort, between the York and James Rivers, provided—among other conditions—“That the enemy’s vessel the Merrimac can be neutralized. . . . That the force to be left to cover Washington shall be such as to give an entire feeling of security for its safety from menace.”

It will be noted, that while “the force left to cover Washington” should be such as to insure an entire feeling of security, “that no specified numbers of troops were stated and the strength of such force was therefore indefinite, the generals themselves being divided in opinion as to what numbers were necessary to establish “an entire feeling of security.”

The report of the action of this council was immediately communicated to the War Department, and the same day the Secretary telegraphed to General McClellan as follows: “The President having considered the plan of operations agreed upon by yourself and the commanders of army corps, makes no objections to the same, but gives the following directions as to its execution:

1. Leave such force at Manassas Junction as shall make it entirely certain that the enemy shall not repossess himself of that position and line of communication.

2. Leave Washington entirely secure.

3. Move the remainder of the force down the Potomac, choosing a new base at Fortress Monroe, or anywhere between here and there, or, at all events, move such remainder of the army at once in pursuit of the enemy by some route.”

Preparations were at once begun for the projected movement and “the troops destined to form the active army were collected in camps convenient to the points of embarkation,” and on April 1st, General McClellan himself took his departure for Fortress Monroe.

On that date, he reported to the Adjutant General of

the army that “there would be left for the garrisons and the front of Washington under General Wadsworth some 18,000 (troops) inclusive of the batteries under instruction.” On April 2nd, General Wadsworth reported to the Secretary of War as follows:

“I have the honor to submit the following condensed statement of the forces left under my command for the defense of Washington:

Infantry .....	15,335
Artillery .....	4,294
Cavalry .....	848
	— — —
	20,477
Deduct sick and in arrest. ....	1,455
	— — —

Total present for duty..... 19,022

I deem it my duty to state that, looking at the numerical strength and character of the force under my command, it is in my judgment entirely inadequate to, and unfit for the important duty to which it is assigned.”

The same date Secretary Stanton addressed Adjutant General Thomas and Major General Hitchcock as follows:

“Generals: I beg leave to refer to you the following papers:

1st. The President’s War Order No. 3.

2nd. The report of a council held at Headquarters, Fairfax Court House, March 13th.

3rd. The President’s instructions to General McClellan March 13th.

4th. The report of General McClellan April 1st.

5th. The report of General Wadsworth as to the forces in his command, and upon examination, I desire you to report to me whether the President’s order and instructions have been complied with in respect to the forces to



be left for the defense of Washington and its security, and at Manassas, and, if not, wherein those instructions have been departed from.”

In answer to the Secretary's interrogatories, Generals Thomas and Hitchcock under date of April 2, made answer as follows: “In view of the opinion expressed by the council of the commanders of the army corps of the force necessary for the defense of the capital, though not numerically stated, and of the force represented by General McClellan as left for that purpose, we are of opinion that the requirement of the President that this city shall be left entirely secure, not only in the opinion of the General-in-Chief, but that of the Commanders of all the army corps also, has not been fully complied with.”

The following day President Lincoln issued the following order to wit: “The Secretary of War will order that one or the other of the corps of General McDowell and General Sumner remain in front of Washington until further orders from the Department, to operate at or in the direction of Manassas Junction, or otherwise, as occasion may require; that the other corps not so ordered to remain go forward to General McClellan as speedily as possible; that General McClellan commence his forward movements from his new base at once, and that such incidental modifications as the foregoing may render proper be also made.”

On April 4th, in accordance with this command of the President, the Adjutant General made report to General McClellan as follows: “The President deeming the force to be left in front of Washington insufficient to insure its safety, has directed that McDowell's army corps should be detached from the forces operating under your immediate direction. Major General McDowell has accordingly been instructed to report for orders to the Secretary of War. . . .”

On the 5th of April General McClellan from his headquarters "Near Yorktown," addressed the President as follows: "The enemy are in large force along our front, and apparently intend making a determined resistance. A reconnaissance just made by General Barnard shows that their line of works extends across the entire Peninsula from Yorktown to Warwick River. Many of them are very formidable. Deserters say they are being reinforced daily from Richmond and from Norfolk. Under these circumstances I beg that you will reconsider the order detaching the First Corps from my command. In my deliberate judgment the success of our cause will be imperilled by so greatly reducing my force when it is actually under the fire of the enemy and active operations have commenced. Two or three of my divisions have been under fire of artillery most of the day. I am now of the opinion that I shall have to fight all the available force of the rebels not far from here. Do not force me to do so with diminished numbers. But whatever your decision may be, I will leave nothing undone to obtain success. If you cannot leave me the whole of the First Corps. I urgently ask that I may not lose Franklin and his division."

April 6th, Secretary Stanton sent the following dispatch to General Wool at Fort Monroe: "Please let me know fully the state of operations toward Yorktown and whether it is necessary to send more than Sumner's corps which is on the way down."

The same date General McClellan in a communication addressed to General Wool, makes the following statements: "Your dispatch of the 6th inst, was duly received

I regret exceedingly that I have been deprived of the First Corps and thus give up the movement we talked about.

But I have lost about 50,000 men since I commenced this operation and do not feel strong enough to detach from what I now have, for when all my

people are up I shall not have more than, say 68,000 for duty."

On the 7th of April, General Wool replied to Secretary Stanton as follows: "In reply to your dispatch, . . . I am not sufficiently informed to answer it definitely. I directed the commanding officers before the arrival of Major General McClellan, to make a field return of their troops, but belonging to the Army of the Potomac, they did not consider themselves bound to obey the order, and no returns were made, consequently I have no means of ascertaining accurately the strength of the Army of the Potomac. From a conversation with General McClellan I am induced to believe that with General Sumner's corps he must have over 100,000 men, with a large train of artillery. He informs me that the enemy has in and about Yorktown, 30,000 men. If the enemy is no stronger I think he had a sufficient force to overcome it. He complains, however, of taking from him 45,000 men under McDowell which he says compels him to change his plans of operations, what these were he has not informed me."

On the day preceding, the President in answer to a dispatch from General McClellan had telegraphed him " . . . you have now over 100,000 troops with you independent of General Wood's command. I think you better break the enemy's line from Yorktown to Warwick River at once. This will probably use time as advantageously as you can."

To this General McClellan under date of April 7th, replied. " The whole line of the Warwick, which really heads within a mile of Yorktown is strongly defended by detached redoubts and other fortifications, armed with heavy and light guns. . . . It will be necessary to resort to the use of heavy guns and some siege operations before we assault. All the prisoners state that General J. E. Johnston arrived at Yorktown yesterday

with strong re-enforcements. It seems clear that I shall have the whole force of the enemy on my hands—probably not less than 100,000 men and probably more. In consequence of the loss of Blenker's division and the First Corps my force is probably less than that of the enemy, while they have all the advantage of position. I am under great obligations to you for the offer that the whole force and material of the Government will be as fully and as speedily under my command as heretofore or as if the new departments had not been created. Since my arrangements were made for this campaign at least 50,000 men have been taken from my command. . . . When my present command all join I shall have about 85,000 men for duty, from which a large force must be taken for guards, scouts, etc. With this army I could assail the enemy's works, and perhaps carry them, but were I in possession of their intrenchments and assailed by double my numbers I should have no fears as to the result.

Under the circumstances that have been developed since we arrived here I feel fully impressed with the conviction that here is to be fought the great battle that is to decide the existing contest. I shall of course commence the attack as soon as I can get up my siege train, and shall do all in my power to carry the enemy's works; but to do this with a reasonable degree of certainty requires, in my judgment, that I should, if possible, have at least the whole of the First Corps to land upon the Severn River, and attack Gloucester in the rear. . . .”

On April 9th, the President in reply wrote him the following letter:

“My Dear Sir: Your dispatches complaining that you are not properly sustained, while they do not offend me, do pain me very much. Blenker's division was withdrawn from you before you left here, and you know the pressure under which I did it, and, as I thought, acquiesced in it—certainly not without reluctance.

After you left I ascertained that less than 20,000 unorganized men, with a single field battery, were all you designed to be left for the defense of Washington and Manassas Junction, and part of this even was to go to General Hooker's old position. General Banks' corps, once designed for Manassas Junction, was diverted and tied up on the line of Winchester and Strasburg, and could not leave it without again exposing the Upper Potomac and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. This presented, or would present when McDowell and Sumner should be gone, a great temptation to the enemy to turn back from the Rappahannock and sack Washington.

My explicit order that Washington should, by the judgment of all the commanders of army corps, be left entirely secure, had been neglected. It was precisely this that drove me to detain McDowell.

I do not forget that I was satisfied with your arrangement to leave Bank's at Manassas Junction; but when that arrangement was broken up and nothing was substituted for it, of course I was constrained to substitute something for it myself. And allow me to ask, do you really think I should permit the line from Richmond via Manassas Junction to this city to be entirely open except what resistance could be presented by less than 20,000 unorganized troops? This is a question which the country will not allow me to evade.

There is a curious mystery about the number of troops now with you. When I telegraphed you on the 6th saying you had over 100,000 with you, I had just obtained from the Secretary of War, a statement, taken, as he said, from your own returns, making 108,000 then with you and en-route to you. You now say you will have but 85,000 when all en-route to you shall have reached you. How can the discrepancy of 23,000 be accounted for? As to General Wool's command, I understand it is doing for you pre-

cisely what a like number of your own would have to do if that command was away.

I suppose the whole force which has gone forward for you is with you by this time, and, if so, I think it is the precise time for you to strike a blow. By delay the enemy will relatively gain upon you—that is, he will gain faster by fortifications and re-enforcements than you can by re-enforcements alone. And once more let me tell you it is indispensable to you that you strike a blow. I am powerless to help this. You will do me the justice to remember I always insisted that going down the bay in search of a field, instead of fighting at or near Manassas, was only shifting and not surmounting a difficulty; that we would find the same enemy and the same or equal intrenchments at either place. The country will not fail to note, is now noting, that the present hesitation to move upon an intrenched enemy is but the story of Manassas repeated. I beg to assure you that I have never written you or spoken to you in greater kindness of feeling than now, nor with a fuller purpose to sustain you, so far as, in my most anxious judgment, I consistently can. But you must act.”

The following certified statement is the report, signed by General McClellan and his Ass't Adjutant General, “showing the number of men composing the Army of the Potomac after its disembarkation on the Peninsula April 13, 1862:”

	Aggregate Present for Duty.	Total Aggregate Present and Absent.
Major Gen'l McClellan, general staff and unassigned troops.	14,333	17,411
Second Corps—General Sumner	18,778	21,948
Third Corps—Gen'l Heintzelman.	34,628	39,633
Fourth Corps—Gen'l Keyes.	33,231	38,729
Grand aggregate	100,970	117,721

## CHAPTER II

McClellan again appeals for Franklin's division for the necessary investment of Gloucester Point—Franklin's division en-route—"Confident of results now"—Letter of General Magruder—His insignificant strength at Yorktown—Commander Missroon urges the immediate disembarkation of Franklin's troops and investment of Gloucester—A call for 100 pounder Parrotts and siege guns—Brilliant engagement, a one gun battery silenced—Secretary's Stanton's congratulations—Another handsome engagement, some prisoners taken—Digging trenches and erecting batteries, anxiety for heavy guns—Immense amount of work done—Corduoy roads and rifle pits—A call for 200 pounder Parrotts and Sea Coast Mortars—More 20 pounder Parrotts wanted—Missroon's surprise at number and weight of cannon in position—A gentleman of "high character" defines the situation at Yorktown—Jeff Davis' plans and McClellan's strategy—Letters from Gen. D. H. Hill—He ridicules McClellan and reports sad condition of the rebels—Letter from Gen. J. E. Johnston—He reviews the conditions at Yorktown—"No one but McClellan could have hesitated to attack"—McClellan's anxiety for 20 and 30 pounder Parrotts—A call for the Parrott guns in and around Washington alarms the President—His dispatch—"Is there anything to be done"—Glowing promises—Batteries being rapidly completed and enemy unusually quiet—The farce ends—"Yorktown is in our possession"—Official strength of Magruder's and McClellan's armies compared.

**G**ENERAL McClellan however, still insisted upon the numerical weakness of his forces and on the 10th of April he telegraphed to Secretary Stanton as follows:

"The reconnoissance to-day proves that it is necessary to invest and attack Gloucester Point. Give me Franklin and McCall's divisions, under command of Franklin and I will at once undertake it.

If circumstances of which I am not aware make it impossible for you to send me two divisions to carry out this final plan of campaign, I will run the risk and hold myself responsible for the results if you will give me Franklin's division. If you will confide in my judgment I entreat that you will grant this request

The fate of our cause depends upon it. Although willing under the pressure of necessity to carry this through with Franklin alone, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I think two divisions necessary.

Franklin and his division are indispensable to me. General Barnard concurs in this view. I have determined upon the point of attack, and am at this moment engaged in fixing the positions of the batteries."

To this urgent appeal, the Secretary, on the following day made this reply:

"Franklin's division is marching to Alexandria to embark. McCall's will be sent if the safety of this city will permit. Inform me where you want Franklin to land. He will embark to-morrow and as quickly as possible."

The next day, General McClellan made the following acknowledgment:

"Your dispatch received. I thank you most sincerely for the re-enforcements sent to me. Franklin will attack on the other side. The moment I hear from him I will state point of rendezvous. I am confident as to results now."

In order to follow the trend of events intelligently and comprehend the true situation at this time, it will not only be proper but interesting, to note and compare the condition and movements on simultaneous dates, of the forces against which General McClellan was so strenuously contending.

On the 11th of April, Major General J. B. Magruder, who was at that time in command of the rebel forces in and around Yorktown, addressed the following letter to George W. Randolph, then Secretary of War at Richmond:

"General Hill has reported to me with his division, which he represents as 4,000 strong.



Previous to his arrival I had received about 16,000 men, making, in round numbers, say, 20,000 men.

My old army consisted of 11,500 efficient men, making an aggregate of 31,500.

But large numbers of these are not available for defense on my extended line. Some 1,500 are over the York River at Gloucester Point; about 5,000 at Yorktown, in garrison; 750 at Jamestown Island; 1,000 at Mulberry Island, and 200 at Williamsburg and vicinity.

I have thus about 23,000 men on a line 14 miles long to meet an enemy estimated at between 100,000 and 200,000.

I wish 10,000 additional men, if possible, and a greater amount of field artillery; the garrison's work requiring the greatest part of what I have.

The enemy is reported to have three hundred rifle pieces, and I think truly, and their number must tell dreadfully on us.

All my troops are now in position, or taking position, as fast as they arrive, and I have no reserve, the important necessity of which you can understand in the face of an enemy so much exceeding us."

The marked contrast between the foregoing letter of General Magruder, in tone and tenor, with the preceding dispatches of General McClellan will be apparent.

In General McClellan's dispatch to Secretary Stanton, sent the day after the date of the letter of General Magruder's, it will be noted that he gave positive assurance that he "had determined upon the point of attack" on Gloucester Point, and that with Franklin's division he would at "once undertake it," holding himself responsible for the results, the success of which he "felt assured."

General Franklin apparently, had arrived at his destination on the 14th, for on that date McClellan, in a dispatch addressed to "Abraham Lincoln," said:

“I have seen General Franklin and beg to thank you for your kind consideration. . . . Our field guns annoyed the enemy considerably to-day. Roads and bridges now progressing rapidly. Siege guns and ammunition coming up very satisfactorily. Shall have nearly all up to-morrow. The tranquillity of Yorktown is nearly at an end.”

In this dispatch no intimation was given of a purpose to make the promised speedy “attack” upon Gloucester Point which, according to General Magruder was at that time being defended by only 1,500 men.

That statement would seem to be verified by a letter of this date addressed to General McClellan by Commander J S. Missroon in command of one of the gunboats stationed there who urged that the attack be made without delay; and, under the circumstances it seems surprising that General Franklin’s force did not at once take possession of the place it was so “necessary to invest,” and for which express purpose that force had been dispatched.

The letter of Commander Missroon was as follows:

“I am very sorry you are obliged to defer your visit to-day, as we may soon have thick weather.

The enemy are collecting about the picket station I designated yesterday as the one where notes were being taken. The troops are in the rear, out of range, and come down in squads of a dozen to look at the ships. They seem to anticipate us.

From the ship to-day it would seem that the works being thrown up at Gloucester’s upper works are to defend their rear, which has been neglected up to this time to a certain extent. Our movement on it should be hastened, to save our troops as much as possible.

Last night a contraband came on board from Gloucester in a canoe, at which ~~they fired~~ He is not intelligent;

says there are only five companies of troops in Gloucester and that they have many pickets out. . . . One half hour on board this vessel is all that would be necessary to give you a clear idea from this standpoint.

I much fear if we delay or are obliged to delay our landing the troops will find a battery in the rear of picket station to oppose them with telling effect."

The next day McClellan telegraphed the Secretary of War:" . . . "Our working parties very strong to-day. Hope to make good progress in the roads and bridges leading to the position of our heavy batteries. . . . I am on the point of going on board gunboats with Franklin to reconnoiter."

In another dispatch the same day he asks: "Can you send us some more 100 pounder rifle and 4 1-2 inch guns? Need them much. Please do all possible to hurry forward all the train 30 pounder Parrotts, 8 inch siege howitzers, etc., that are still behind. I am anxious to open as soon as possible with overwhelming batteries."

On the 16th of April, McClellan telegraphed Secretary Stanton: "General Smith has just handsomely silenced the fire of the so-called one-gun battery and forced the enemy to suspend work. . . ." And later on the same day he telegraphed: "Smith has gained a very important position, which will, I hope enable us to control a passage of the Warwick. He completely silenced the fire of the enemy's batteries."

General McClellan evidently regarded this circumstance as a wonderful feat for he added, "The gallantry and skill shown by General Smith to-day will, I hope, secure his immediate confirmation by the Senate as brigadier-general of volunteers. Our loss is small, thanks to the arrangement of General Smith. "

The Secretary replied. "Good for the first lick! Hurrah for Smith and the one-gun battery! Let us have York-

town with Magruder and his gang before the first of May, and the job will be over.”

On the 18th, McClellan again telegraphed as follows: “At about one-half hour after midnight the enemy attacked Smith’s division and attempted to carry his guns. Smith repulsed them handsomely and took some prisoners. . . . The firing was very heavy. All is now quiet.”

Later the same day he again telegraphed: “Things pretty quiet to-day. We commenced to-day and this evening the construction of six batteries, besides the task of converting a temporary shelter into a permanent battery. Most of these are concealed from view, and I hope to complete them before the enemy finds us out. . . . The main artillery road to the trenches will be essentially finished to-morrow evening. I hope to have twelve heavy guns in battery by day-break, five more to-morrow night, twenty-one more next night.

“During the last mentioned night we will commence the first parallel and the heavy batteries that will be in exposed positions, and by means of the batteries I have mentioned we will be able to cover completely the work in the exposed trenches, and am anxious that heavy guns and ammunition should be hurried forward as rapidly as possible. . . .

We have done an immense amount of work, and its effects will soon be apparent. Everything goes well. . . .”

To these dispatches Secretary Stanton replied:

“Your dispatches of this morning received and communicated to the President.

He directed me to ask you whether the indications do not show that the enemy are inclined to take the offensive. ”

To this inquiry, General McClellan replied:

“I cannot hope for such good fortune as that the enemy

will take the offensive. I am perfectly prepared for any attack the enemy may make. . . . I beg that the President will be satisfied that the enemy cannot gain anything by attacking me."

The many miles of corduroy roads diverging in all directions through the woods around Yorktown, with the numerous intrenchments, rifle-pits, embankments, and other evidences of engineering skill will yet bear witness to the "immense amount of work" done there, and for future generations will no doubt remain to attest the wonderful misuse of loyal energy and the stupendous lack of brave determination.

On the same date General McClellan telegraphed to General Ripley, Chief-of-Ordinance at Washington. "Will be glad to have another 200 pounder Parrott. Can provide for more if you have them. Will also be glad to have more 10-inch Sea Coast Mortars. Send the additional 13-inch Mortars. Can use them well." And on the 20th. "Please send me all the 20 pounder Parrotts you can as soon as possible.—I am short of siege guns."

In a letter of this date addressed to General McClellan by Commander Missroon, that officer says ". . . I have received your letter of 19th, and am astonished to find the number and weight of Cannon you will have in position tomorrow, but fear the rain will prevent much work." . . .

The following communication was addressed to Genl. McClellan on the 25th by the Assistant Secretary of War, viz.: "General: The inclosed extract from a letter just received at this Department I am advised . . . to send to you, in view of the high character of the writer" . . . (Inclosure) "Excuse me for again troubling you, but the condition of things in your neighborhood causes me much anxiety. In my opinion there is to be no stand made by the Confederates at Yorktown. The array there

and Jeff Davis' visit and inspection is a mere demonstration. If Davis is a general, which I think he is, he will on some day, in less than ten days, concentrate all his forces suddenly and attack McDowell at Fredericksburg or between that point and Richmond.

Preparatory to this he will draw off, and is probably now drawing off, all his troops from Yorktown, leaving all the time enough there to amuse McClellan and keep out of the way his 70,000 men. For this 10,000 men will be ample, and he will fall on McDowell with his whole disposable force."

It will now be proper to again refer to the condition of the enemy during the corresponding period, which is best told in the following correspondence.

On April 15, General D. H. Hill in command at Yorktown addressed Secretary of War Randolph as follows:

"As nothing can be procured here without personal attention, I have sent my quartermaster up to get 2000 tents. The army is diminishing most fearfully by sickness from fatigue, exposure, and stampedes.

The enemy has sent up two gunboats, which have been bombarding this place for two days. We have but two guns which can reach them, and they have but 16 rounds of disk shells. The other shells are worthless. The delay of McClellan can only be accounted for in one of two ways: He is either waiting for a formidable mortar and siege train, or he is waiting until more iron-clad vessels are made. .

The enemy with his water facilities can multiply his artillery indefinitely, and as his is so superior to ours, the result of such a fight cannot be doubtful. .

We are no match for the Yankees at an artillery play with our wretched ordnance, poor in quality and feeble in quantity. . If we had 100,000 men here we could march out of the trenches and capture McClellan, unless

he has a swift footed horse. He has been anxious to dine in Richmond and we would be glad to send him up with an escort. . . . I have a wretched tallow candle stuck in a box and cannot see the lines."

Again on the 21st, he reports as follows

"It is very plain that with our defective artillery and munitions we cannot contend with the enemy using his favorite arms. My only hope has been that our force would be so increased as to enable us to meet the rascals in the open field. But they certainly outnumber us now two to one, and our sick list is fearfully increasing. Two-thirds of our men have no tents. Exposure, fatigue, loss of sleep, and hard work are sending hundreds to the rear every day. Could not our whole available force be thrown here and the war ended by one crushing blow? . .

As the defense of our position is now concerned we are immeasurably the losers. The enemy keeps beyond the range of our guns and pelts us all day long. It is true that but few are killed daily, but our men are kept in the wet trenches and are harassed day and night. Disease will destroy a hundred fold more than the Yankee artillery. Protected by these guns, however, he can retire to his comfortable tents and fires, while our poor fellows are in the wet and cold.

This is a sad but true picture of our situation. Would that we had force enough to end this state of things by a fair, open field fight. This is our only hope."

On the 22d of April General J. E. Johnston made the following report regarding the situation at Yorktown to General R. E. Lee.

"Maj. Gen. D. H. Hill, commanding at Yorktown, reports that the enemy used signal lights across the river and fired signal guns last night. He thinks that this may indicate a dash at Richmond from West Point or Urbana, and suggests that the North Carolina army be brought to

that place. . I have heard neither from Jackson nor Field. . Stationed here (Lee's Farm) I can obtain no information except from or through Richmond. Should the enemy's movements on the north or south of you require the withdrawal of these troops you will have to give me notice.

Labor enough has been expended here to make a very strong position, but it has been wretchedly misapplied by the young engineer officers. No one but McClellan could have hesitated to attack. The defensive line is far better for him than for us."

General McClellan, however, in the meantime, was unremitting in his efforts to make success doubly sure in his attempt to capture Yorktown, as the following dispatches will fully explain and which, when taken in connection with his preceding ones, and contrasted with the foregoing gloomy reports of Generals Hill and Johnston, will appear, to say the least, ludicrous.

On April 27th he telegraphed Secretary Stanton:

"I am glad to write that the first parallel now extends to York River, being now complete. The most exposed portion was commenced to-night by the regulars. They are now well under cover, and the parallel will be nearly finished by daylight. Everything quiet to-night."

Later the same day, he again telegraphed: "The first parallel essentially finished without accident; are at work upon batteries for the 10-inch mortars. Will commence new gun batteries to-night. Am anxious for the arrival of the expected 20 and 30 pounder Parrotts.

The 13-inch mortars and the 200-pounder Parrotts—ten of the first, and one of the latter—are safely within the mouth of Wormley's Creek, and will be in batteries to-day. No rain to-day. The roads are becoming horrid again "

On the 28th he telegraphed: "Nothing of interest dur-



ing the night. No firing on our right, where the work proceeded undisturbed. On the left the enemy fired a good deal, but hurt no one, nor was the work interrupted. Have just sent a heavy field battery to silence a gun or two of the enemy that have been impertinent this morning, but have hurt no one. Weather has improved and we are making good progress."

Again on the same day, "Enemy have fired a good deal to-day, and have done no damage that I have heard of. Silenced one of their batteries near Wynn's Mill to-day. Commenced a battery to-night from right of first parallel to reach position for a heavy battery bearing upon water batteries and Gloucester. Mortar batteries progressing; will soon be ready to open.

Would be glad to have the 30-pounder Parrotts in the works around Washington at once. Am very short of that excellent gun."

On the 30th he telegraphed: "Opened upon Yorktown wharf to-day with Battery No. 1; drove off all their schooners and put a stop to all operations in that quarter. Result quite satisfactory. Work on new batteries progressing rapidly. Condition of roads renders it extremely difficult to get up the heavy guns and ammunition. Our first parallel now secure and flanks well covered."

McClellan's call for the Parrott guns in the fortifications around Washington was, under the circumstances, indeed most extraordinary and drew from the President the following sarcastic dispatch: "Your call for Parrott guns from Washington alarms me, chiefly because it argues indefinite procrastination. Is anything to be done?"

On May 1st McClellan telegraphed: "Our work is going on very well. The batteries of the first parallel will be ready before the guns and mortars can be got to their places. Enemy fires a great deal. Our rifle pits

are rightly advancing. Indications of a brush to-night. The time for opening fire is now rapidly approaching.

Enemy still in force and working hard."

On the 2d he reported: "Enemy fired continually during the night, doing but little damage. Our rifle pits on our left advanced considerably during the night and somewhat on the right. Our batteries being rapidly completed, notwithstanding the enemy's fire, which is quite warm. . . ."

Again in the evening he reported, "The enemy's fire very hot to-day and rained almost continuously. . . . The weather has been so favorable to-day that we have made unusual progress, not only in construction of trenches and batteries, but also in landing and bringing up guns and ammunition. . . ."

May 3d he telegraphed, "Enemy unusually quiet last night and this morning. Our rifle pits pushed forward considerably last night. Most satisfactory progress being made in arming the batteries. . . ."

And on the 4th he telegraphed:

"Yorktown is in our possession."

He had at last discovered that the enemy had practically evacuated the town several days before.

The following official statements will show the relative strength of the contending forces during this period.

"Abstract from Memorandum Return of the Right Wing, Army of the Peninsula, Major General John B. Magruder commanding for April 23d, 1862."

	Aggregate Present.	Aggregate Present and Absent.
First Division—Gen. D. R. Jones.	5,672	9,325
Second Division—Gen. McLaws.	11,751	11,751
Heavy Artillery—Gen. R. S. Ewells.	697	697
Cavalry—J. Johnston.	661	661

60 ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, 1861—1863

Cavalry—J. L. Davis.....	194	194
Cavalry — Poage's.....	112	112

— — —	— — —
19,087	22,740

Pieces Heavy Artillery..... 3

Pieces Field Artillery..... 49

“The number of men composing the Army of the Potomac, on the 30th day of April, 1862, accurately compiled from the Morning Reports signed by Maj. Gen. McClellan and his Assistant Adjutant General.”

	Aggregate Present for Duty.	Total Aggregate Present and Absent.
General Staff, Engineers and Engineer Brigade, Cavalry Division, Escort to Headquarters and Provost Guards.....	13,787	16,657
Second Corps—General Sumner....	19,054	22,002
Third Corps—Gen. Heintzelman....	34,633	39,710
Fourth Corps—Gen. Keyes.....	33,586	39,561
Franklin's Division.....	11,332	12,448
	— — —	— — —
	112,392	130,378

## CHAPTER III

Evacuation of Yorktown—Franklin to disembark at West Point—Pursuit of the enemy—Pushing the enemy to the wall—Over-precautious—McClellan asks for some of General Wool's troops—Wool's caustic reply—The rear guard of enemy overtaken—Gen. Heintzelman is forbidden to attack—Torpedoes—The barbarous tactics of the rebels described by Gen. Barry—Battle of Williamsburg—Rout of the enemy—McClellan arrives after the battle—Alarm at Richmond—Preparations for evacuating the city—Letters from Gen. Johnston to Lee—Demoralized condition of the rebel army—A doleful letter from Gen. Hill—The rebel dead at Williamsburg—Public records at Richmond prepared for removal—McClellan objects to corps organizations—His letter to Secretary Stanton—His wishes temporarily granted—A private letter from the President—McClellan's partiality for Porter and Franklin—A serious question.

**O**N the morning of May 4th, immediately after the discovery had been made that Yorktown had been evacuated, General McClellan telegraphed to the Secretary of War: "We have the ramparts; . . . I have thrown all my cavalry and horse artillery in pursuit, supported by infantry. I move Franklin and as much more as I can transport by water up to West Point to-day. No time shall be lost. . . . I shall push the enemy to the wall."

The forces under General McClellan were immediately started in pursuit of the enemy, who were flying with all speed toward Richmond; and the confidence and determination manifested in the tone of his last dispatch to the Secretary of War, gave hopeful promise of prompt and speedy action.

As the hours passed by, however, the same feelings of uncertainty and doubt which had prompted him while at Yorktown to persistently call for more men and artillery, seemed again to have possessed him, as the following message sent by General Wool at Fort Monroe on May

5th, to the Secretary of War, would seem to indicate.  
 “ . . . The quartermaster at this post has no horses or trains to spare from the Potomac Army. Major General McClellan has called on me to place two regiments at Stony Creek Court House or Lee’s Mill, to protect his rear for the time being. I have deemed proper to give you this information, in order that you may perfectly understand the position of General McClellan.”

Again, on the 6th, he said, “The desponding tone of Major General McClellan’s dispatch of last evening more than surprises me. He says his entire force is undoubtedly considerably inferior to that of the rebels.

If such is the fact I am still more surprised that they should have abandoned Yorktown.”

On the morning of May 4th, General Wm. F. Smith, who was in the advance of the troops, was ordered by McClellan’s Chief-of-Staff to “push on after the enemy,” and later General Smith reported, “The enemy is reported to be in strong force in front of me, I am going to engage him unless I get other orders.”

To this dispatch McClellan replied, “ . . . Do not engage him until ordered by me, as I am making other arrangements to cut him off.”

The troops, however, had meantime overtaken the rear-guard of the enemy at Williamsburg, and while McClellan was yet in Yorktown, had, after a sharp engagement, driven them from their intrenchments and put them to rout.

General Heintzelman was forbidden to pursue the attack on the following day by a dispatch from McClellan’s Assistant Adjutant General, saying, “ . . . He does not wish you to attack at daylight unless you receive orders to do so. He desires you to open communication as early as possible between here and your headquarters.

It is probable that Hancock's success this afternoon will at least check the enemy."

Thus was the avowed determination to "lose no time in pushing the enemy to the wall," made to yield to doubts, and a policy of indefinite procrastination and inaction resumed.

In speaking of the evacuation of Yorktown, and the pursuit of the enemy, in a dispatch sent to the Secretary of War May 4th, General McClellan says: "The rebels have been guilty of the most murderous and barbarous conduct in placing torpedoes within the abandoned works near wells and springs; near flag staffs, magazines, telegraph offices, in carpet bags, barrels of flour, etc." A number of soldiers of the Union Army were killed by means of these hidden explosives.

That this method of warfare was known to, or at least approved of, by some of the rebel commanders, is evidenced by the indorsement which Major General D. H. Hill made to a report on the subject, who said: "In my opinion all means of destroying our brutal enemies are law."

Brigadier General Wm. F. Barry, Chief of Artillery of the Army of the Potomac, in his report thus speaks of this circumstance: "These shells were the ordinary 8 or 10 inch mortar or columbiad shells, filled with powder, buried a few inches below the surface of the ground, and so arranged with some fulminate, or with the ordinary friction primer, that they exploded by being trod upon or otherwise disturbed.

In some cases articles of common use, and which would be most likely to be picked up, such as wheelbarrows, pick-axes or shovels were laid upon the spot with apparent carelessness. Concealed strings or wires leading from the friction primer of the shell to the superincumbent articles were so arranged that the slightest disturbance

would occasion the explosion, . . . they were basely planted by an enemy who was secretly abandoning his post on common roads, at springs of water, in the shade of trees, at the foot of telegraph poles, and, lastly, quite within the defenses of the place—in the very streets of the town.

A number of our men were killed by them before the disgraceful trick was discovered. . . . I was myself a witness of the horrible mangling by one of these shells of a cavalryman and his horse outside of the main work . . . and also of the cruel murder in the very streets of Yorktown of an intelligent young telegraph operator, who, while in the act of approaching a telegraph pole . . . trod upon one of these shells villainously concealed at its foot.

It is generally understood that these shells were prepared by General George W. Rains, of the Confederate Army, for his brother, Brig. Gen. Gabriel Rains, the commander of the post of Yorktown, at whose instigation they were prepared and planted.

The belief of the complicity of General Gabriel Rains in this dastardly business is confirmed by the knowledge possessed by many officers of our army of a similar mode of warfare inaugurated by him while disgracing the uniform of the American Army during the Seminole war in Florida."

General McClellan, when he arrived upon the ground on the evening of the day of the battle of Williamsburg, addressed the following note to General Franklin: "I found great confusion here, but all is now right. Hancock made a magnificent charge, taking 150 prisoners—killing as many more. I now feel safe. Have ordered Sedgwick to fall back at daylight to Yorktown, there to embark under your orders."

I think the enemy will evacuate during the night; if not,

I can probably beat him. I will, as soon as matters are developed here, push up Porter's, the regulars, and other divisions, joining you myself as soon as I feel safe here. We have now a tangent hit. I arrived in time."

The following correspondence will not be without interest, and will give a clear idea of the feeling prevailing during this time at Richmond, and of the condition of the forces against which McClellan was contending and of whom he had such fears.

On May 9th, Secretary of War Randolph, at Richmond, addressed the President of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Petersburg R. R. Co., and likewise the President of the Virginia Central Railroad as follows: "The Government desires, in the event of the occupation of this city by the enemy, that all of your rolling stock and material necessary for the operation of the road should be sent South. You will, therefore, prepare it for removal; and should the danger become imminent, you will remove it without waiting for further instructions."

On the same date, General J. E. Johnston, in command of the rebel troops, in a letter addressed to General R. E. Lee from New Kent Court House, Va., spoke as follows: " . . . The two officers named are necessary to the preservation of anything like organization in this army. The troops, in addition to the lax discipline of volunteers, are partially discontented at the conscription act and demoralized by their recent elections. Stragglers cover the country, and Richmond is no doubt filled with the absent without leave.

It has been necessary to divide the army into two parts; one under General Smith, on this road; the other under General Longstreet, on that by the Chickahominy. Each of these divisions is probably much larger than the "Army of the North." This army cannot be commanded without these two officers; indeed, several more major-



generals like them are required to make this an army. The men are full of spirit when near the enemy, but at other times to avoid restraint leave their regiments in crowds. To enable us to gather the whole army for battle would require a notice of several days."

In another letter of same date he says, "It is reported that several thousand stragglers from this army are in Richmond, or near it, on the way. I request that the commanding officer may be directed to compel them to rejoin their regiments forthwith. Many who were sent to the city slightly sick should now rejoin. A large number of muskets taken to Richmond by these sick . . ."

On the 10th of May, General D. H. Hill writes the following doleful letter to Secretary Randolph: "It is with deep mortification that I report that several thousand soldiers and many individuals with commissions have fled to Richmond under pretext of sickness. They have even thrown away their arms that their flight might not be impeded. Cannot these miserable wretches be arrested and returned to their regiments, where they can have their heads shaved and drummed out of service? Do make General Winder hunt up all who have not surgeons' certificates.

General, the lies of the newspapers ought to be stopped. Could they not be forbidden to publish anything? In the fight near West Point we lost but 16 killed and wounded. The Richmond papers report a thousand killed and wounded. What must the enemy think of his success? Our force at Williamsburg is reported to be larger than that of the enemy by the Richmond press, whereas the only troops engaged were the divisions of Longstreet and myself, and McClellan was in person at Williamsburg with at least two corps of his army. I think that the enemy got a severe check at Williamsburg and Barhamsville. Our own loss has been heavy. At Wil-

Williamsburg we must have had a thousand killed and wounded. I fear a heavier loss.” On the same date Secretary Randolph gave orders to all the Heads of Bureaus in the Department, to “Have such of your records and papers as ought to be preserved, and are not required for constant reference, packed in boxes, for removal and marked, so as to designate the bureau to which they belong.”

This is only intended as a prudent step, and is not caused by any bad news from the army. There is no need, therefore, for any panic in the city, and it should be prevented by the assurance that we have every reason to think that the city can be successfully defended.”

It will be remembered that just previous to his departure for the Peninsula, General McClellan had requested permission for the Secretary of War to postpone the organization of army corps, which formations had been ordered to be made by the President. Immediately after the battle of Williamsburg he again revived the subject and on the 9th of May addressed the following letter to Secretary Stanton: “I respectfully ask permission to reorganize the army corps. I am not willing to be held responsible for the present arrangement, experience having proved it to be very bad, and it having very nearly resulted in a most disastrous defeat. I wish either to return to the organization by division, or else be authorized to relieve incompetent commanders of army corps. Had I been one-half hour later on the field on the 5th we would have been routed and would have lost everything.

Notwithstanding my positive orders I was informed of nothing that occurred, and I went to the field of battle myself upon unofficial information that my presence was needed to avoid defeat. I found there the utmost confusion and incompetency, the utmost discouragement on

the part of the men. At least a thousand lives were really sacrificed by the organization into corps.

I have too much regard for the lives of my comrades and too deep an interest in the success of our cause to hesitate for a moment. I learn that you are equally in earnest, and I, therefore, again request full and complete authority to relieve from duty with this army commanders of corps or divisions who prove themselves incompetent."

To this request, the Secretary on the same day replied, "The President is unwilling to have the army corps organization broken up, but also unwilling that the commanding general shall be trammelled and embarrassed in actual skirmishing, collision with the enemy, and on the eve of an expected great battle. You, therefore, may temporarily suspend that organization in the army now under your immediate command, and adopt any you see fit until further order. "

The President also, at the same time, wrote him privately as follows:

"My dear sir: I have just assisted the Secretary of War in framing the part of a dispatch to you relating to army corps, which dispatch, of course, will have reached you long before this will. I wish to say a few words to you privately on this subject. I ordered the army corps organization not only on the unanimous opinion of the twelve generals whom you had selected and assigned as generals of divisions, but also on the unanimous opinion of every military man I could get an opinion from, and every modern military book, yourself only excepted. Of course I did not on my own judgment pretend to understand the subject. I now think it indispensable for you to know how your struggle against it is received in quarters which we cannot entirely disregard. It is looked upon as merely an effort to pamper one or two pets and to

prosecute and degrade their supposed rivals. I have had no word from Sumner, Heintzelman, or Keyes. The commanders of these corps are, of course, the three highest officers with you, but I am constantly told that you have no consultation or communication with them; that you consult and communicate with nobody but General Fitz John Porter and perhaps General Franklin. I do not say these complaints are true or just, but at all events it is proper you should know of their existence. Do the commanders of corps disobey your orders in anything?

When you relieved General Hamilton of his command the other day you thereby lost the confidence of at least one of your best friends in the Senate. And here let me say, not as applicable to you personally, that Senators and Representatives speak of me in their places as they please without question, and that officers of the army must cease addressing insulting letters to them for taking no greater liberty with them.

But to return: Are you strong enough—are you strong enough, even with my help—to set your foot upon the necks of Sumner, Heintzelman, and Keyes all at once; This is a practical and very serious question for you. The success of your army and the cause of the country are the same, and, of course, I only desire the good of the cause.”

## CHAPTER IV

Halting at Williamsburg—The start for Richmond—Army in magnificent spirits—Franklin finally connects—Norfolk evacuated and the Merrimac blown up—The navy to be protected—McClellan calls for gunboats and more of Wool's troops—Wool's sarcasm—Slow progress of the army—McClellan's fears—His tale of woe to the President—Asks for all the disposable troops of the government—The President's reply—McDowell ordered to Richmond, but not to uncover Washington—McClellan's purpose not to fight—Strength of the two armies compared—General Wool's letters—McClellan's intention to intrench within 10 miles of Richmond—A letter from the President—More of Wool's troops wanted—Wool's scathing reply—Gen. Bank's critical position—McDowell's march suspended—The President's letter—Washington helpless but for McDowell's presence—The President's stirring appeal for action—McClellan's procrastinating tactics—Across the Chicahominy—Two complete victories reported for Porter—The President questions their importance—Affairs at Richmond—Preparing to evacuate.

**A**FTER a five day's halt at Williamsburg, on the 9th of May the army resumed its march towards Richmond, about 60 miles distant. On the same day General McClellan reported in a dispatch to the "War Department, . . . "My troops are in motion and in magnificent spirits. They have all the air and feelings of veterans. It will do your heart good to see them. Have effected junction with Franklin. Instructions have been given so that the Navy will receive prompt support whenever and wherever required."

On the following day, General Wool who had effected a landing for his forces from Fort Monroe advanced upon Norfolk, which city upon his approach was evacuated by the rebel troops and formally surrendered, they having first destroyed the navy yard and blown up the ram "Merrimac." Upon receipt of this news the day following, McClellan "urged that our gunboats and the iron

clads be sent as far as possible up the James River without delay?

This request was immediately complied with and Commodore Goldsborough was directed by the Secretary of the Navy to "push all the boats you can spare up the James River, even to Richmond."

Under such encouraging and favorable auspices, it was confidently hoped that but few days would elapse before the ultimate goal would be reached, and the long and eagerly awaited news of the fall of Richmond would gladden all loyal hearts throughout the north.

Almost from the moment however, that he left Yorktown, McClellan was haunted with the fear of his inferiority in strength of numbers of his forces and on the 12th he made an application to the Secretary of War to be furnished with two regiments from the command of General Wool for the purpose of supplying garrisons at Yorktown, Gloucester and Williamsburg. This demand elicited the following rather sarcastic letter addressed to McClellan by General Wool. "The Merrimac is blown up. Our vessels of war have gone up James River; among others the Monitor. Your flank will be protected on the James River. A small detachment will answer for Yorktown.

I want all my troops. I intend going to Suffolk, leaving a few troops at Newport News and a sufficient force at Fort Monroe."

Five days after leaving Williamsburg, the army had reached the vicinity of New Kent Court House, midway between Williamsburg and Richmond; his scouts meantime, having approached to the vicinity of the Chickahominy, and the gunboats to within 8 miles of Richmond.

One of the superior advantages urged by General McClellan in advocating his selection of the present route for the operations of the army, was the excellence of the

roads, which he claimed, as here "being passable at all seasons of the year." Now however, their bad condition retarded his progress and he reported that "rain on this soil makes the roads incredibly bad for army transportation," which was undoubtedly true. On the 14th, he reported to Secretary Stanton, "Am detained by the necessity of making new roads and repairing old ones. Move to morrow morning to White House in force. Everything well closed up, and will try to keep it so. News from front indicates enemy in large force. Raining to day. No time will be lost in bringing about a decisive battle."

From the day of his departure from Williamsburg however, he had become more and more deeply impressed with the great magnitude of the forces against which he would have to contend, which conviction he had spared no time or pains in his endeavors to impress upon the minds of the authorities at Washington, and notwithstanding this courageous determination to bring about a battle, on the same day he made known his deplorable condition to the President as follows: "I have more than once telegraphed to the Secretary of War, stating that in my opinion the enemy were concentrating all their available force to fight this army in front of Richmond, and that such ought to be their policy. I have received no reply what ever to any of these telegraphs. I beg leave to repeat their substance to Your Excellency, and to ask that kind consideration which you have ever accorded to my representations and views."

All my information from every source accessible to me establishes the fixed purpose of the rebels to defend Richmond against this army by offering us battle with all the troops they can collect from east, west and south, and my own opinion is confirmed by that of all my commanders whom I have been able to consult.

Casualties, sickness, garrisons and guards have much

weakened my force, and will continue to do so. I cannot bring into actual battle against the enemy more than 80,000 men at the utmost, and with them I must attack in position, probably intrenched, a much larger force, perhaps double my numbers. . Even if more troops than I now have should prove unnecessary for purposes of military occupation, our greatest display of imposing force in the capital of the rebel Government will have the best moral effect. I most respectfully and earnestly urge upon Your Excellency that the opportunity has come for striking a fatal blow at the enemies of the constitution, and I beg that you will cause this army to be re-enforced without delay by all the disposable troops of the Government. I ask for every man that the War Department can send me (by water). Any commander of the re-enforcements whom your Excellency may designate will be acceptable to me, whatever expression I may have heretofore addressed to you on that subject.

I will fight the enemy, whatever their force may be, with whatever force I may have, and I firmly believe that we shall beat them, but our triumph should be made decisive and complete. The soldiers of this army love their government and will fight well in its support. You may rely upon them. They have confidence in me as their general and in you as their President. Strong re-enforcements will at least save the lives of many of them. The greater our force, the more perfect will be our combinations and the less our loss.

For obvious reasons I beg you to give immediate consideration to this communication, and to inform me fully at the earliest moment of your final determination."

The President, in answer to this tale of woe, on the 15th responded as follows: "Your long dispatch of yesterday is just received. I will answer more fully soon. Will say now that all your dispatches to the Secretary of War



have been promptly shown to me. Have done and shall do all I could and can to sustain you. Hoped the opening of James River and putting Wool and Burnside in communication, with an open road to Richmond, or to you, had effected something in that direction. I am still unwilling to take all our force off the direct line between Richmond and here.”

And the Secretary of War also, on the 18th sent him the following reply: “Your dispatch to the President asking re-enforcements has been received and carefully considered.

The President is not willing to uncover the capital entirely, and it is believed that even if this were prudent, it would require more time to effect a junction between your army and that of the Rappahannock by the way of the Potomac and York Rivers than by a land march. In order, therefore, to increase the strength of the attack upon Richmond at the earliest moment General McDowell has been ordered to march upon that city by the shortest route. He is ordered—keeping himself always in position to save the capital from all possible attack—so to operate as to put his left wing in communication with your right wing, and you are instructed to co-operate, so as to establish this communication as soon as possible, by extending your right wing to the north of Richmond. . . . In any event you will be able to prevent the main body of the enemy’s forces from leaving Richmond and falling in overwhelming force upon General McDowell. He will move with between 35,000 and 40,000 men. . . .

At your earnest call for re-enforcements he is sent forward to co-operate in the reduction of Richmond, but charged, in attempting this, not to uncover the city of Washington; and you will give no order, either before or after your junction, which can put him out of position to cover this city

The President desires that Gen-

eral McDowell retain the command of the Department of the Rappahannock and of the forces with which he moves forward.”

By order of the President. Edwin M. Stanton,  
Secretary of War.”

Notwithstanding the familiar bombastic declarations in his dispatch to the President, of his determination to “fight the enemy whatever force he had,” and regardless of “whatever their force might be;” and of his firm belief in his ultimate success; it must be apparent that it was not McClellan’s purpose to risk an engagement, and even had his forces been double what they really were it is extremely doubtful whether he would then have considered it prudent to have done so.

The utter ridiculousness of the pretensions, or claims of his disparity in numbers is best shown by a comparison of the subjoined official statements of the relative strength of the contending armies at that period.

“Abstract from return of the Army of the Potomac, Maj. Gen’l George B. McClellan, U. S. Army commanding, for May 20, 1862.”

Aggregate present ..	107,088
Aggregate present and absent.	128,864
Field pieces of artillery	300

On May 21st, General R. E. Lee addressed General Joseph E. Johnston as follows: “The President desires to know the number of troops around Richmond, how they are posted, and the organization of the divisions and brigades; . . . The information relative to the composition and position of your army can readily be furnished. . . .”

“Strength of the several brigades of the army of Northern Virginia near Richmond, as shown by General Johnston’s memorandum of May 21, 1862.”

“First (Smith’s) Division. . .	.. 10,592
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Second (Longstreet's) Division. . . . .	13,816
Third (Magruder's) Division. . . . .	15,920
Fourth (D. H. Hills) Division. . . . .	11,151
Stuart's Cavalry Brigade... . . . .	1,289
Pendleton's Reserve Artillery (56 guns)	920

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Grand total . . . . . 53,688''

In the light of the conditions manifested in the preceding reports, the following correspondence of Maj. Gen. Wool will doubtless prove interesting and the fine vein of quiet sarcasm running through it will be appreciated.

On the 16th of May, he addressed Secretary Stanton from Fort Monroe, as follows: "I am here in command of the two most important positions in the possession of the Federal Government. If any disaster should befall General McClellan I am wholly unable with the force I have to defend these two positions. The calls made upon me by General McClellan to take care of his sick, wounded and prisoners of every description take from me a considerable number of men. I have sent to Norfolk about 8,000 men and will send over another thousand, making in all about 9,000 rank and file. With this force I have ten pieces of light artillery. This force would be wholly inadequate to defend Norfolk in case General McClellan should be defeated. At the same time Newport News and Fort Monroe would be exposed to capture by a victorious army, they having but 3,000 men, effective to defend both places. I want ten regiments and 300 horses to put myself in a condition to resist the force that might be brought against me in case of General McClellan's defeat.

It is said he intends to intrench his army some 10 miles from the position occupied by the rebels 10 miles in front of Richmond. . . ."

Again on the 18th he reported as follows: "As you may have already been informed, the Navy was repulsed with-

in 8 miles of Richmond. All quiet here and at Norfolk. I am preparing for coming events. I hope you will send ten regiments over; if they should not be required to defend Norfolk they would be ready for the forward march. . . .”

To these requests the Secretary made the following reply: “It will be impossible at this time to send you more troops. Five generals in the field are asking for troops, and there are none to give them. You will have to hold fast with the force you have.” Whereupon General Wool responded: “The desponding tone of General McClellan in calling for more troops induced me to ask for more troops. The calling for troops on his part creates a suspicion of weakness, and consequently may lead to defeat. It is therefore I called for more troops, to be ready to meet coming events foreshadowed by calls made on the Government. . . .”

The people of Norfolk have shown as yet no disposition to acknowledge the Government of the United States; at the same time assert with confidence that General McClellan will be beaten, the rebels having more than 100,000 men in and around Richmond. I do not believe the latter statement, yet it may be true.”

On May 18th, Gen'l McClellan reported that his “pickets were within a mile of Bottom's Bridge and scouts have been within a quarter of a mile. Am advancing on the other roads. . . . I am getting on well.”

Bottom's Bridge over the Chickahominy, was within about ten miles of Richmond.

General McClellan, in disregard of the positive and emphatic directions which the President had given in reference to the movements of General McDowell with his command, still insisted upon their joining him by way of the Potomac; and on the 21st of May, in response to his demands the President replied “ . . . McDowell and

his forces can reach you by land sooner than he could get aboard of boats, if the boats were ready at Fredericksburg, unless his march shall be resisted, in which case the force resisting him will certainly not be confronting you at Richmond. By land he can reach you in five days after starting; whereas by water he would not reach you in two weeks, judging by past experience. Franklin's single division did not reach you in ten days after I ordered it."

On May 24th, Secretary Stanton in response to an urgent request from General McClellan for more troops, sent the following dispatch to General Wool: "It is very desirable that you should send a regiment to garrison Whitehouse, on the Paumuskey for General McClellan, if it can be done. The President is anxious you should do it, if possible, as we can send him nothing from here. Please answer."

To this request, General Wool returned the following sarcastic reply. "If Major General McClellan cannot sustain himself with the forces he has with him and his large train of artillery he will not be able to do it with a regiment from my command. Norfolk ought to be maintained. If McClellan should be driven back, he has West Point and Yorktown to fall back upon, and at least a part of the Navy to sustain him. I do not apprehend such a result. Rumors are rife that the rebel army is leaving Richmond, and his advance is within five miles of Richmond.

I am preparing to ship forward my troops to Suffolk and beyond, depending on circumstances. Most of my troops are in advance of Norfolk. If General McClellan should be driven back, I shall stand in greater need of troops to keep Norfolk than he will to sustain himself at West Point and Yorktown, with gunboats to support him. If I had as many troops as the general, I would not ask for more. I would march and take Richmond, which I

have no doubt General McClellan will do. The force of the rebels are by no means equal to his.

Deserters and contrabands from Richmond say the rebel army is leaving Richmond. They are, at least most of them, pressed into the army against their will and not to be relied on in time of need. I cannot spare General McClellan a regiment. He does not want it."

The same day the President telegraphed General McClellan that, "In consequence of General Bank's critical position I have been compelled to suspend General McDowell's movements to join you. The enemy are making a desperate push upon Harper's Ferry, and we are trying to throw General Fremont's force and part of General McDowell's in their rear."

The next day the President again telegraphed him, " . . . General Bank's was at Strasburg, with about 6,000 men, Shields having been taken from him to swell a column for McDowell to aid you at Richmond, and the rest of his force scattered at various places. On the 23rd a rebel force of 7,000 to 10,000 fell upon one regiment and two companies guarding the bridge at Front Royal, destroying it entirely; crossed the Shenandoah, and on the 24th (yesterday) pushed on to get north of Banks, on the road to Winchester. . . . This morning a battle ensued between the two forces, in which General Banks was beaten back into full retreat toward Martinsburg, and probably is broken up into a total rout. Geary on the Manassas Gap Railroad, just now reports that Jackson is now near Front Royal, with 10,000 troops, following up and supporting, as I understand, the force now pursuing Banks. Also that another force of 10,000 is near Orleans, following on in the same direction. Stripped bare, as we are here, I will do all we can to prevent them crossing the Potomac at Harper's Ferry or above. McDowell has about 20,000 of his forces moving back to the vicinity of

Front Royal, . . . We are sending such regiments and dribs from here and Baltimore as we can spare to Harper's Ferry, supplying their places in some sort by calling in militia from the adjacent states. . . . This is now our situation. If McDowell's force was now beyond our reach we should be entirely helpless. Apprehensions of something like this, and no unwillingness to sustain you, have always been my reason for withholding McDowell's from you. Please understand this, and do the best you can with the forces you have."

Again, on the 25th, the President sent the following dispatch, which would have stirred almost any one but McClellan, into some kind of activity.

"The enemy is moving north in sufficient force to drive General Banks before him—precisely in what force we cannot tell. He is also threatening Leesburg, and Geary, on the Manassas Gap Railroad, from both north and south—in precisely what force we cannot tell. I think the movement is a general and concerted one, such as would not be if he was acting upon the purpose of a very desperate defense of Richmond. I think the time is near when you must either attack Richmond or give up the job and come to the defense of Washington. Let me hear from you instantly."

To this satirical message McClellan the same date replied:

"Telegram received. Independently of it, the time is very near when I shall attack Richmond. The object of the movement is probably to prevent re-enforcements being sent to me. All the information obtained from balloons, deserters, prisoners and contrabands agrees in the statement that the mass of the rebel troops are still in the immediate vicinity of Richmond ready to defend it. I have no knowledge of Banks' position and force nor

what there is at Manassas; therefore cannot form a definite opinion as to the force against him.

I have two corps across Chickahominy, within 6 miles of Richmond; the others on this side at other crossings within same distance and ready to cross when bridges are completed."

While in front of Yorktown, as has been repeatedly shown, McClellan's time was occupied in digging "parallels," constructing rifle pits and batteries, and mounting siege guns; and he was thus engaged even after the rebels had practically evacuated the town. At no time since his arrival upon the Peninsula had any argument, persuasion or even the humiliating shafts of satire and ridicule had force sufficient to move him to seize the opportunities so apparent to others, which were within his grasp, by assuming the offensive and manifest a purpose on his part to make good the pompous boasts of a speedy attack upon the enemy and of "pushing them to the wall."

Nearly three weeks had now elapsed since his army had left Williamsburg and during that period it had advanced only about 50 miles. The same system of procrastinations and dilatory tactics which had characterized all of his preceding movements were conspicuous in these while in front of Richmond.

When his progress was not impeded by impassable roads or stress of weather, his constant lack of re-enforcements to an already unwieldy army, could invariably be relied on to furnish ample reasons—(notwithstanding his repeated declarations of confidence of success), for deterring him from risking a combat with imaginary hordes, whose numbers were doubtless being industriously magnified for the purpose of intimidating a commander of whose character and unwarlike qualifications, his shrewd and cunning adversaries were well apprised.

On the 28th he reported to the Secretary of War that



“Porter had gained two complete victories over superior forces, yet I feel obliged to move in the morning with reinforcements to secure the complete destruction of the rebels in that quarter. In doing so I run some risk here, but I cannot help it. The enemy are even in greater force than I had supposed. I will do all that quick movements can accomplish, but you must send me all the troops you can, and leave to me full latitude as to choice of commanders. It is absolutely necessary to destroy the rebels near Hanover Court House before I can advance.”

The President, evidently did not regard this incident in the light of a very serious or important event, nor the victory gained by his favorite as brilliant one as McClellan would wish to have it appear, for on the same date he telegraphed, “I am very glad of General F. J. Porter’s victory. Still, if it was a total rout of the enemy, I am puzzled to know why the Richmond and Fredericksburg Railroad was not seized again, as you say you have all the railroads but the Richmond and Fredericksburg.

I am puzzled to see how, lacking that, you can have any, except the scrap from Richmond to West Point. The scrap of the Virginia Central from Richmond to Hanover Junction without more, is simply nothing. That the whole of the enemy is concentrating on Richmond I think cannot be certainly known to you or me.

Saxton, at Harper’s Ferry, informs us that large forces supposed to be Jackson’s and Ewell’s, forced his advance from Charlestown to-day. General King telegraphs us from Fredericksburg that contrabands give certain information that 15,000 left Hanover Junction Monday morning to re-enforce Jackson. . . .”

The situation of affairs as it was viewed in Richmond at this particular time will be best explained by the following “Memorandum,” issued by Secretary of War Randolph, “to Chiefs of Bureaus, May 28, 1862.”

“Should our army, contrary to all reasonable expectation be forced to abandon Richmond, the notice of the movement may not be sufficient to enable us to remove our archives. It has been determined, therefore, to place such of them as are not indispensable for daily use on one of the lines of public conveyance, in order that their removal, if rendered necessary, may be effected without difficulty. Wagons will be ready to-night at 9 o’clock to commence the removal, which should be conducted quietly and from the rear of the building to avoid panic or excitement in the city. The provost marshal will conduct the transshipment, and the adjutant general will detail an officer to take charge of the archives, who will receive his instructions from the Secretary.”

## CHAPTER V

Within 6 miles of Richmond—A terrific storm—The battle of Fair Oaks—Casey's division overwhelmed—Rout of the rebels—The President's significant dispatch—Strength of the army—Richmond in a panic—A lost opportunity, the "fatal blow" withheld within 4 miles of Richmond—Waiting—McClellan's bravado—His address—Calls for more troops—Still waiting—Omnious shadows—Asks for re-enforcements from Halleck's army—Strength of the army—An imperative demand for more troops—Hears from deserters and attacked with panic—Lee's letter to Jackson—While McClellan calls for troops Lee depletes his army—A battle imminent—After to-morrow—Contempt of the enemy for McClellan's generalship—McClellan's generals anxious to attack—Intrenching—McClellan desires to express his views on the "state of military affairs throughout the country"—Strength of his army—He hears from contrabands—Falstaffian growth of the rebel army—Another tale of woe—Brave resolves—Meets an attack and calls for more troops—His insolence to Commodore Goldsborough—Scathing retort—A remarkable dispatch from McClellan to the Secretary of War—The one urgent need in the army.

**A**S before noted, the Army Corps of Keyes and Heintzelman had crossed over the Chickahominy and were now within 6 miles of Richmond. During the night of May 30th, there occurred a most terrific rain storm which General Keyes in his report thus describes: "Through all the night of the 30th of May, there was raging a storm, the like of which I cannot remember. Torrents of rain drenched the earth, the thunder bolts rolled and felled without intermission, and the heavens flashed with a perpetual blaze of lightning."

The enemy at once seized upon the advantages which this sudden deluge, by raising the waters of the treacherous Chickahominy, offered them, by massing the troops yet remaining in Richmond, in an effort to fall upon and crush the forces of Keyes and Heintzelman before the remaining corps could reach them from the opposite side of

the river, and at noon on the following day accordingly, their combined forces in overwhelming numbers suddenly fell upon Casey's division of Keyes' Corps, which occupied the most advanced position of the army at Fair Oak's station.

A terrific battle ensued in which Casey's division was overwhelmed and driven from their position with much loss. General Sumner however, with his corps had succeeded late that afternoon, in crossing the river, when the rebels were driven back in confusion and the lost ground fully recovered.

On the following morning, June 1st, the President, in response to McClellan's announcement of the battle, and of his preceding calls for re-enforcements, sent him the following significant dispatch.

"You are probably engaged with the enemy. I suppose he made the attack. Stand well on your guard, hold all your ground, or yield any only inch by inch and in good order. This morning we merge General Wool's department into yours, giving you command of the whole, and sending General Dix to Fort Monroe and General Wool to Fort McHenry." . . .

The total strength of McClellan's army at this time, now consisted, according to the official returns made on the 31st day of May, as follows:

	Aggregate Present for Duty.	Total Aggregate Present and Absent
"Army of the Potomac—		
Grand aggregate	98,008	127,160
"Gen. Wool's Command at Fort Monroe—		
Grand aggregate	11,514	14,007

The attack made by the rebels having been repulsed and they driven back upon Richmond in confusion and with great loss, that city and the government, was in a

panic. The "opportunity had arrived for striking a fatal blow at the enemies of the Constitution." All that was necessary, and which any other than McClellan would have quickly done, would have been simply to stretch out his hand and seize it, thereby ending, or at all events materially lessening the subsequent long and bloody struggle with its terrible sufferings and sacrifices.

Concerning this engagement, and of the conditions as they existed at that moment, General J. G. Barnard, chief engineer of the Army of the Potomac, in his subsequent report thus speaks:

"The repulse of the rebels at Fair Oaks should have been taken advantage of. It was one of those occasions which if not seized do not repeat themselves. We now know the state of demoralization and dismay in which the rebel army retreated. We now know that it could have been followed into Richmond. . . . Although we did not then know all that we now do, it was obvious enough at that time that when the rebels struck a blow at our left wing they did not leave any means in their hands unused to secure success."

In response to another report made by General McClellan to the Secretary of War on June 1st, the President thus replied:

"Thanks for what you could and did say in your dispatch of noon to-day to the Secretary of War.

If the enemy shall not have renewed the attack this afternoon, I think the hardest of your work is done."

On the 2d of June, McClellan telegraphed, "Our left is everywhere advanced considerably beyond the positions it occupied before the battle. I am in strong hopes that the Chickahominy will fall sufficiently to enable me to cross the right. . . . Our victory complete. I expect still more fighting before we reach Richmond."

To this dispatch the Secretary of War responded as follows:

“Your telegram has been received and we are greatly rejoiced at your success,—not only in itself, but of the dauntless spirit and courage it displays in your troops.

The indications are that Fremont or McDowell will fight Jackson to-day, and as soon as he is disposed of another large body of troops will be at your service. The intelligence from Halleck shows that the rebels are fleeing, and pursued in force from Corinth. All interest now centres in your operations, and full confidence is entertained of your brilliant and glorious success.”

On the same date McClellan again sent a lengthy dispatch to the Secretary in which he says: “Am delighted to hear of General Halleck’s success. . . . Our left is now within 4 miles of Richmond. I only wait for the river to fall to cross with the rest of the force and make a general attack. Should I find them holding firm in a very strong position I may wait for what troops I can bring up from Fort Monroe, but the morale of my troops is now such that I can venture much, and do not fear for odds against me. The victory is complete, and all credit is due to the gallantry of our officers and men.”

Thus, with an army flushed with victory, the morale of which was such that no odds was feared against it, and camped within 4 miles of the coveted and panic stricken city, were hopes renewed of speedy action and glorious results. But alas! the long cherished hopes were only doomed to bitter disappointment, for in the waters of the Chickahominy was found another favored obstacle to be added to the overwhelming phantom ranks of the rebel army and lend additional color to the apparent purpose foreshadowed in “only waiting.” It was commendable, however, on the part of the commander to award the cred-

it for "complete victory" to the "gallantry of the officers and men."

On June 2nd, General McClellan issued the following inspiring address to the Army:

"Soldiers of the Army of the Potomac: I have fulfilled at least a part of my promise to you. You are now face to face with the rebels, who are at bay in front of their Capitol. The final and decisive battle is at hand. The enemy has staked his all on the issue of the coming battle. Let us meet and crush him here in the very centre of the rebellion.

Soldiers, I will be with you in this battle, and share its dangers with you. Let us strike the blow which is to restore peace and union to this distracted land."

On the 4th he sent the following dispatch to the President: "Terrible rain storm during the night and morning; not yet cleared off. Chickahominy flooded; bridges in bad condition.

I have taken every possible step to insure the security of the corps on the right bank, but I cannot re-enforce them here until my bridges are all safe, as my force is too small to insure my right and rear, should the enemy attack in that direction, as they may probably attempt. Our loss in the late battle will probably exceed 5,000.

I am satisfied that the loss of the enemy was very considerably greater; they were terribly punished. I mention these facts now merely to show you that the Army of the Potomac has had serious work, and that no child's play is before it."

And the same day he telegraphed to the Secretary of War: "Please inform me at once what re-enforcements, if any, I can count upon having at Fortress Monroe or White House within the next three days.

It is of the utmost importance that I should know this immediately. The losses in the battle of the 31st and 1st will amount to 7,000. If I can have five new regi-

ments for Fort Monroe and its dependencies I can draw three more old regiments from there safely. After the losses in our last battle I trust that I will no longer be regarded as an alarmist. . . ”

To this, the following day, the Secretary replied: “I will send you five new regiments as fast as transportation can take them; the first to start to-morrow from Baltimore. I intend sending you a part of McDowell’s force as soon as it can return from its trip to Front Royal; probably as many as you want. . . .”

On June 7th, General McClellan replied to this as follows: “ . . . I have the honor to state that the Chickahominy River has risen so as to flood the entire bottoms to the depth of 3 or 4 feet. The whole face of the country is a perfect bay, entirely impassable for artillery, or even Cavalry. . . . I am glad to learn that you are pressing forward re-enforcements so vigorously. I shall be in perfect readiness to move forward and take Richmond the moment McCall reaches here and the ground will admit the passage of artillery. . . .”

Thus, while the waters of the dangerous Chickahominy, and the unfavorable conditions of the weather was such as continually to keep the roads—which McClellan had previously insisted were “passable at all seasons of the year,”—in an impassable condition, thereby temporarily preventing or obstructing the movements of his army; notwithstanding the solemnly inspiring hopes held forth in the foregoing reports, of a speedy and successful movement, the ominous shadows of coming events as cast therein, were gradually and perceptibly lengthened in the succeeding ones.

On the 10th of June, he telegraphed the Secretary of War: “ . . . I am completely checked by the weather. The roads and fields are literally impassable for artillery; almost so for infantry. The Chickahominy is in



a dreadful state. We have another rain-storm on our hands. I shall attack as soon as the weather and ground will permit; but there will be a delay, the extent of which no one can foresee. . . .

In view of these circumstances, I present for your consideration the propriety of detaching largely from Halleck's army to strengthen this for it would seem that Halleck has now no large organized force in front of him, while we have. . . . And even although the reinforcements might not arrive in season to take part in the attack upon Richmond, the moral effect would be great, and they would furnish valuable assistance in ulterior movements. I wish it to be distinctly understood that whenever the weather permits I will attack with whatever force I may have, although a larger force would enable me to gain much more decisive results. . . ."

To this on the following day, the Secretary replied: "Your dispatch of 3.30 yesterday has been received. I am fully impressed with the difficulties mentioned. . . . and am striving to the utmost to render you every aid in the power of the Government. Your suggestions will be immediately communicated to General Halleck, with a request that he shall conform to them . . . McCall's force was reported yesterday as having embarked and on its way to join you. It is intended to send the residue of McDowell's force also to join you as speedily as possible.

Fremont had a hard fight day before yesterday with Jackson's force at Union Church. . . . He claims the victory, but was pretty badly handled. It is clear that a strong force is operating with Jackson for the purpose of detaining the forces here from you. . . . Be assured, general, that there never has been a moment when my desire has been otherwise than to aid you with my whole heart, mind and strength since the hour we first met; and whatever others may say for their own purpose you have

2 friend, or more anxious to support you, or more joyful  
 1 never had, and never can have, any one more truly your  
 3 than I shall be at the success which I have no doubt will  
 soon be achieved by your arms."

As has been previously stated, the strength of McClellan's army according to his official report of the 31st of May, consisted of 127,160 men, of which the aggregate present for duty, was 98,008. Since that date and up to June 15th, the official reports show there had been sent to him, including the forces of General Wool at Fortress Monroe, an additional aggregate of 39,441, making the total grand aggregate of his army at that date 166,601 of which 130,368 were reported as "present for duty." Notwithstanding his positive assurances that he had "no fears of odds against him," and of his resolute purpose to make a speedy attack upon the enemy "with whatever forces he had," and take Richmond, his request that reinforcements be sent him from General Halleck's victorious army from half way across the continent, certainly appears very strange. On the 16th he sent to the Adjutant General the following dispatch: "I need imperatively the following new troops, and beg that they be sent without delay. Two regiments more are required for General Dix; one regiment is required for Yorktown from two to four are required for Williamsburg, the White House and Railroad guards. Events are showing the necessity of troops here asked for. Please let me know by telegraph whether my request can be complied with."

The same date, upon hearing from a "deserter from Richmond" that the rebels "had sent their public records and a large amount of ammunition to Danville," that "Mrs. Jefferson Davis had gone to North Carolina;" that "Richmond was strongly fortified," and that "they meant to fight to the last," and "had about 130,000 men

on half rations," "with the rank and file, many of them anxious to get away." He seemed to have been thrown into a panic, which later on developed into a stage of desperation. He immediately telegraphed the Secretary of War: "This corresponds with the accounts I have received from various sources. Please let me know when, and which direction McDowell's command will come."

In the meantime, while McClellan was thus waiting for additional re-enforcements, favorable weather, and passable roads, the enemy was actively in motion. Their movements and methods, in contrast with those of McClellan will be better understood from the following communications from General R. E. Lee addressed from Richmond to General Stonewall Jackson.

On the 11th of June, he wrote him, "Your recent successes have been the cause of the liveliest joy in this army as well as in the country. The admiration excited by your skill and boldness has been constantly mingled with solicitude for your situation. The practicability of re-enforcing you has been the subject of earnest consideration. It has been determined to do so at the expense of weakening this army. Brigadier General Lawton with six regiments from Georgia is on his way to you, and Brigadier General Whiting with eight veteran regiments leaves here to-day. The object is to enable you to crush the forces opposed to you. Leave your enfeebled troops to watch the country and guard the passes covered by your cavalry and artillery. . . while this army attacks General McClellan in front. He will thus I think, be forced to come out of his intrenchments, where he is strongly posted on the Chickahominy, and apparently preparing to move by gradual approaches on Richmond. . ."

Again on the 16th he addressed him as follows, "From your account of the position of the enemy I think it would be difficult for you to engage him in time to unite

with this army in the battle for Richmond. Fremont and Shields are apparently retrograding, their troops shaken and disorganized, and some time will be required to set them again in the field. If this is so, the sooner you unite with this army the better. McClellan is being strengthened; Burnside is with him, and some of McDowell's troops are also reported to have joined him. There is much sickness in his ranks, but his re-enforcements by far exceed his losses. The present, therefore, seems to be favorable for a junction of your army and this. . . . In moving your troops you could let it be understood that it was to pursue the enemy in your front. Dispose those to hold the valley so as to deceive the enemy, keeping your cavalry well in their front. . . . Let me know the force you can bring, and be careful to guard from friends and foes, your purpose and your intention of personally leaving the valley. . . . Unless McClellan can be driven out of his intrenchments he will move by positions under cover of his heavy guns within shelling distance of Richmond. I know of no surer way of thwarting him than that proposed. . . ."

General Wool, in his dispatch to the Secretary of War on May 16th, had declared it to be the reputed purpose of General McClellan, to repeat in front of Richmond the same tactics he had pursued at Yorktown; and notwithstanding McClellan's repeated declarations of a purpose to "strike the blow which would restore peace to a distracted country," it appears that General Lee was so well confirmed in the same belief that he did not fear,—at the same time when McClellan was calling for re-enforcements to deplete his own army in order to re-enforce Jackson.

On the 18th of June, McClellan reported that "several deserters state that troops have left Richmond to re-enforce Jackson; . . . If re-enforcements have gone to

Jackson, they are probably in considerable force, not less than 10,000."

To this dispatch, President Lincoln the same day replied:

"Yours of to-day making it probable that Jackson has been re-enforced by about 10,000 from Richmond is corroborated by a dispatch from General King at Fredericksburg. . . . If this is true it is as good as a re-enforcement to you of an equal force. I could better dispose of things if I could know about what day you can attack Richmond, and would be glad to be informed. . . ."

General McClellan immediately replied, "I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your dispatch of to-day. Our army is well over the Chickahominy, except the very considerable forces necessary to protect our flanks and communications. Our whole line of pickets in front runs within 6 miles of Richmond. The rebel line runs within musket range of ours. Each has heavy support at hand. A general engagement may take place any hour. An advance by us involves a battle more or less decisive. The enemy exhibit at every point a readiness to meet us. They certainly have great numbers and extensive works. If 10,000 or 15,000 men have left Richmond to re-enforce Jackson it illustrates their strength and confidence. After to-morrow we shall fight the rebel army as soon as Providence will permit. We shall await only a favorable condition of the earth and sky and the completion of some necessary preliminaries."

"After to-morrow," was certainly a very safe, although an indefinite point of time to specify, and the sending of rebel troops "from Richmond to re-enforce Jackson," instead of "illustrating their strength and confidence," would, under the circumstances, seem rather to indicate on their part, a contempt for their opponents; and alas! whatever part Providence may have had in the

matter, the “necessary preliminaries” were never completed.

Regarding the strength of the enemy’s forces at this time, and of the opinions of some of the generals as to the feasibility of making an attack upon them will be shown in the following reports on this date of Generals Hooker and Casey.

General Hooker reported, “The duty of obtaining the information desired by the major-general commanding, in his communication of yesterday was assigned the sixteenth Massachusetts Regiment by General Grover. It was executed in fine style. A heavy picket was run against and they attempted to make a stand, but were driven from the forest. Colonel Wyman reports a handsome number of killed and wounded. His loss I should judge had been 15 or 20. . . . The district passed over is only swampy in places. . . .”

General Casey reports, “It has been ascertained by Captain Keenan, commanding the cavalry on duty with my division, that General Stuart of the rebel service, with a body of 2,000 cavalry, is encamped between the New Market road and James River, about 6 miles from my position. I respectfully suggest that a force of 3,000 cavalry, with two pieces of artillery, be at once dispatched to report to me. I am of opinion, from the reports of my scouts and reconnoitering parties, that Stuart’s position is one that may be attacked with a prospect of success.”

Attacking the enemy, however, was not McClellan’s forte, and the plausible stories of alleged deserters was to him more conclusive evidence regarding their strength, than was that obtained by a reconnaissance.

On June 19th, the President, in reference to a report brought from Richmond by a Frenchman, and of other reports from rebel deserters, of reinforcements being sent from there to Jackson, telegraphed General McClellan

as follows: “ . . . If large re-enforcements are going from Richmond to Jackson it proves one of two things, either that they are very strong at Richmond, or do not mean to defend the place desperately.

On reflection, I do not see how re-enforceents from Richmond to Jackson could be in Gordonsville as reported by the Frenchman and your deserters, have not all been sent to deceive?”

To this McClellan replied: “ . . . I have no doubt that Jackson has been re-enforced from here . . . There is not the slightest reason to believe that the enemy intends evacuating Richmond . . . I find him everywhere in force and every reconnaissances costs many lives, yet I am obliged to feel my way foot by foot at whatever cost, so great are the difficulties of the country.

“By to-morrow night the defensive works covering our position on this side of the Chickahominy should be completed. I am forced to do this by my inferiority in numbers, so that I may bring the greatest possible numbers into action and thus secure the army against the consequences of unforeseen disaster.

I would be glad to lay before Your Excellency, by letter or telegraph, my views as to the present state of military affairs throughout the whole country. . . .”

Such a suggestion by the commander of an army which was “face to face with the enemy,” and was only waiting “a favorable condition of earth and sky” to fight the final and decisive battle—to “strike the blow” which would “restore peace and union”—requires no comment.

According to the official reports the strength of the Army of the Potomac on June 20, 1862, was:

	Aggregate Present.	Aggregate Present and Absent
Grand total . . . . .	127,327	156,838
Field pieces of artillery . . . . .	...	316

Another week had elapsed, and although the weather

had improved and General McClellan had ample time to devote to a discussion of the "state of military affairs throughout the country," his "necessary preliminaries" had not yet been fully completed. Meantime, through "contrabands" and "deserters," the rebel forces had multiplied like Falstaff's hosts, while his own in his imagination had rapidly diminished.

On the 25th he telegraphed to Secretary Stanton: " . . . Several contrabands just in give information confirming the supposition that Jackson's advance is at or near Hanover Court House, and that Beauregard arrived, with strong re-enforcements, in Richmond yesterday.

I incline to think that Jackson will attack my right and rear. The rebel force is stated at 200,000, including Jackson and Beauregard. I shall have to contend against vastly superior odds if these reports be true; but this army will do all in the power of men to hold their position and repulse any attack.

I regret my great inferiority in numbers, but feel that I am in no way responsible for it, as I have not failed to represent repeatedly the necessity of re-enforcements; that this was the decisive point, and that all the available means of the Government should be concentrated here. I will do all that a general can do with the splendid army I have the honor to command, and if it is destroyed by overwhelming numbers, can at least die with it and share its fate. But if the result of the action, which will probably occur to-morrow, or within a short time, is a disaster, the responsibility cannot be thrown on my shoulders; it must rest where it belongs. . . ."

To this disheartening excuse for cowardice and inefficiency, the President thus replied:

" . . . Your dispatch of 6.15 p. m. suggesting the probability of your being overwhelmed by 200,000, and



talking of where the responsibility will belong, pains me very much. I give you all I can, and act on the presumption that you will do the best you can with what you have, while you continue, ungenerously I think, to assume that I could give you more if I would. I have omitted and shall omit no opportunity to send you re-enforcements whenever I possibly can."

On June 26th McClellan telegraphed, "I have just heard that our advanced cavalry pickets on the left bank of the Chickahominy are being driven in. It is probably Jackson's advance guard. If this be true, you may not hear from me in some days, as my communications will probably be cut off. The case is perhaps a difficult one, but I shall resort to desperate measures, and will do my best to outmanouver, outwit, and outfight the enemy. Do not belive reports of disaster, and do not be discouraged if you learn that my communications are cut off. . . . Hope for the best, and I will not deceive the hopes you formerly placed in me."

On the following day he again telegraphed the Secretary of War, "Have had a terrible contest, attacked by greatly superior numbers in all directions on this side; we still hold our own, . . . the odds have been immense. . . . I may be forced to give up my position during the night. . . . Had I 20,000 fresh and good troops we would be sure of a splendid victory to-morrow."

The tone of his dispatches presaged an ignominious retreat, and since he had never, since assuming command of the army, ventured to make an attack upon the enemy, it would seem to be unnecessary that in this particular instance he should state that he had been "attacked," and, of course, by "greatly superior numbers."

Meantime, the ardent hopes of his success which had been cherished throughout the North, had turned into

feelings of despondency and doubt, which were destined later to be changed into deepest gloom and despair.

In his requirements he demanded not only all the troops in the control of the Government, but the vessels of the navy as well. His insolent and dictatorial manners elicited from Flag Officer Goldsborough the following spirited protest to the Secretary of the Navy on June 27th, in reference to an order which had been given to him by General Van Vliet of McClellan's staff. "I beg the Department to be assured that I will not permit the ignorance or impertinence of any army officer to interfere for a moment with my duty to the Government. I am well aware of the crisis at Richmond and of the absolute necessity of prompt co-operation on my part with General McClellan.

Immediately upon the receipt of General Van Vliet's telegram, notwithstanding its exceptional tone and address, I took measures to carry out everything it required, and at the earliest possible moment gave orders accordingly. I had supposed, in addressing General Van Vliet upon the subject of his telegram, that General McClellan knew nothing of its wording, but as it now appears to have met his approval, I beg to express the hope that the War Department will enjoin upon him the propriety of inculcating better official manners of addressing me, as his equal in rank, and, last of all, not permitting an officer under his command to address me as a subordinate and refuse to confer upon me the denomination given me by law. General McClellan, as I understand from one his telegrams to me, wishes the Navy Department to give me such orders as will secure a prompt compliance with any reasonable request he may make; he, of course, to be the exclusive judge of reasonableness. This, in effect, is asking to put the vessels of this squadron subject to his disposition.

There is, I regret to say, an evident disposition on the part of various army officers to override and disparage the navy, and it is high time a stop should be put to a feeling at once so ridiculous and peurile."

On the 28th of June General McClellan telegraphed the Secretary of War from Savage Station, as follows: "I now know the full history of the day. On this side of the river (the right bank) we repulsed several strong attacks. On the left bank our men did all that men could do, all that soldiers could accomplish, but they were overwhelmed by vastly superior numbers, even after I brought my last reserves into action. The loss on both sides is terrible. I believe it will prove to be the most desperate battle of the war. The sad remnants of my men behave as men. Those battalions who fought most bravely and suffered most are still in the best order. My regulars were superb, and I count upon what are left to turn another battle, in company with their gallant comrades of the volunteers.

Had I 20,000 or even 10,000 fresh troops to use to-morrow I could take Richmond, but I have not a man in reserve, and I shall be glad to cover my retreat and save the material and personnel of the army. If we have lost the day we have yet preserved our honor, and no one need blush for the Army of the Potomac. I have lost this battle because my force was too small.

I again repeat that I am not responsible for this, and I say it with the earnestness of a general who feels in his heart the loss of every brave man who has been needlessly sacrificed today. I hope to retrieve our fortunes, but to do this the Government must view the matter in the same earnest light that I do. You must send me very large re-enforcements, and send them at once. I shall draw back to this side of Chicahominy, and I think I can withdraw all our material. Please understand that

in this battle we have lost nothing but men, and those the best we have.

In addition to what I have already said, I only wish to say to the President that I think he is wrong in regarding me as ungenerous when I said that my force was too weak. I merely intimated a truth which today has been too plainly proved. If, at this instant, I could dispose of 10,000 fresh men, I could gain a victory to-morrow. I know that a few thousand more men would have changed this battle from a defeat to a victory. As it is, the Government must not and cannot hold me responsible for the result. I feel earnestly to-night. I have seen too many dead and wounded comrades to feel otherwise than that the Government has not sustained this army. If you do not do so now the game is lost.

If I save this army now, I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you, or to any other person in Washington. You have done your best to sacrifice this army.”

In any other country perhaps, or under different circumstances and conditions, such a cowardly and insolent dispatch would have merited and received instant dismissal, and the severest penalty. There had never, either before or since, been a general, or an army so pampered and supported, as had General McClellan and his army; every available resource in the power of the government to furnish had been placed absolutely at his disposal, and every comfort and convenience had been ungrudgingly bestowed. His army was composed entirely of volunteers from the best blood in the land, while the opposing forces consisted largely of unwilling conscripts.

His earnest solicitude for their safety and preservation should have manifested itself while he was loitering in the swamps of the Chickahominy and while the rebel forces were divided. Truly, no one need ever blush for the conduct of the Army of the Potomac. The only re-

enforcement which it really needed was a brave and loyal commander, but alas! the government dare not then supply it.

## CHAPTER VI

The President's patient reply to McClellan—Preparing for retreat—Disappointment and humiliation of the Army—The retreat—On the James—A frantic and assinine appeal—Malvern Hill—McClellan on a gunboat—Report of General Stuart—At Harrison's Landing—Letter of the President—McClellan's misrepresentations—General Lee's statement—A pompous address to the army—Ostentatious bravery—General Lee's letter—The visit of the President—Strength of the respective armies—Appointment of General Halleck as General-in-Chief—General Pope—Halleck visits the army and advises as a military necessity, concentration with Pope, or, an attack upon Richmond, McClellan chooses the latter plan. His chagrin and disregard of orders—Withdrawal of the Army ordered—McClellan's protest—His dilatory tactics—Halleck's caustic order—Change of Scene.

**T**O McClellan's insolent dispatch, the President, the same day replied:

“Save your army at all events, will send re-enforcements as fast as we can. Of course they cannot reach you to-day, to-morrow, or next day. I have not said you were ungenerous for saying you needed re-enforcements. I thought you were ungenerous in assuming that I did not send them as fast as I could. I feel any misfortune to you and your army quite as keenly as you feel it yourself. If you had a drawn battle or a repulse it is the price we pay for the enemy not being in Washington. We protected Washington and the enemy concentrated on you. Had we stripped Washington, he would have been upon us before the troops could have gotten to you. Less than a week ago you notified us that re-enforcements were leaving Richmond to come in front of us. .”

On the same date McClellan issued the following order to his several corps commanders: “It is of vital importance that all the transportation of the Army should in the

movement now taking place be employed exclusively for the carrying of ammunition and subsistence. All tents and all articles not indispensable to the safety or maintenance of the troops must be abandoned and destroyed.

All unnecessary officers' baggage will be left behind; the sick and wounded that are not able to walk must necessarily be left. It is enjoined upon commanders to lose no time in loading their wagons as required."

Thus was the noble "Army of the Potomac," which had by the most solemn and courageous assurance been given to believe that they were soon to be led on to glorious victory, on the eve of their very first opportunity to meet their foes in open combat, disheartened, and discouraged by their panic stricken commander.

On the days of the week following was enacted scenes of terrible suspense, wanton destruction and slaughter. The troops were compelled to fight the enemy by day and to flee by night while the heavens were aglow with the flames of burning stores.

On the 30th, McClellan sent this dispatch to the Secretary of War from "Turkey Bridge" on the James River: "Another day of desperate fighting. We are hard pressed by superior numbers. I fear I shall be forced to abandon my material to save my men under cover of the gun boats. If none of us escape, we shall at least have done honor to the country. I shall do my best to save the army. Send more gun boats."

And on the following day he wrote to the Adjutant General: "Another desperate combat to day. Our troops repulsed the enemy. I was sending orders to renew the combat to morrow, fearing the consequences of farther retreat in the exhausted condition of the troops and being as willing to stake the last chance of battle in that position as any other under the circumstances, when I learned

that the right had fallen back after dark and that the center was following.

I have taken steps to adopt a new line, the left resting on Turkey Island, and thence along a ridge parallel to James River as far as I have the force to hold it. Rodgers will do all that can be done to cover my flanks. I will probably be obliged to change this line in a few days, when I have rested the men, for one lower down, and extending from the Chickahominy to the James. If it is the intention of the Government to re-enforce me largely it should be done promptly and in mass. I need 50,000 more men, and with them I will retrieve our fortunes. More would be well, but that number sent at once will, I think, enable me to assume the offensive. I cannot too strongly urge the necessity of prompt action in this matter. Even a few thousand fresh men within the next twenty-four or forty-eight hours will do much toward relieving and encouraging this wearied army, which has been engaged in constant combat for the last five or six days.”

In still another dispatch of the same date, McClellan reports to the Adjutant General from “Haxall’s Plantation: My whole army is here, with all its guns and material. The battle of yesterday was very severe, but the enemy was repulsed and severely punished. After dark the troops retired to this position. My men are completely exhausted, and I dread the result if we are attacked to-day by fresh troops. If possible I shall retire to-night to Harrison’s Bar, where the gun boats can render more aid in covering our position. Permit me to urge that not an hour should be lost in sending me fresh troops. More gun boats are much needed.

I hope that the enemy was so severely handled yesterday as to render him careful in his movements to-day. I now pray for time. My men have proved themselves



the equals of any troops in the world, but they are worn out. Our losses have been very great. I doubt whether more severe battles have ever been fought. We have failed to win only because overpowered by superior numbers.”

It will be noted that in every one of the foregoing dispatches of General McClellan, there was the same frantic appeal for more troops and gun boats. It may also be added that during the time when the terrible battle of Malvern Hill was raging, he took refuge on one of the gun boats on the James River, evidently determined on his part, not to “do honor to the country” by being captured. He appeared to be totally oblivious to the fact that in their pursuit of his army, the rebel forces were subjected to the same wearisome and exhausting marches, endured the same discomforts and privations, as were his own troops, but in his abject terror, he felt convinced that in every attack made, he was contending against fresh troops.

That this battle was a decisive victory, which only for his cowardice he had but to claim had he been disposed, is shown by the following report of that engagement by General James E. B. Stuart commanding the rebel cavalry, and also of the opinion entertained regarding McClellan’s retrograde movements; General Stuart thus writes: “. . . During the morning I received a note from the commanding general directing me to watch closely any movement of the enemy in my direction.

. . . I replied that there was no evidence of a retreat of the main body from the position before Richmond down the Williamsburg roads, and that I had no doubt the enemy since his defeat was endeavoring to reach the James as a new base, being compelled to surrender his connection with the York.

If the Federal people can be convinced that this was a

part of McClellan's plan, that it was in his original design for Jackson to turn his right flank and our generals to force him from his strongholds, they certainly can never forgive him for the millions of public treasure that his superb strategy cost the nation. He had no alternative left, and, possessed with the information that his retreat was not progressing toward the York, the commanding general knew as well as McClellan himself that he must seek the only outlet left." . . .

After describing his march to join Jackson, General Stuart thus continues, "I ascertained also that a battle had been raging for some time and ceased about an hour after I reached this point. My arrival could not have been more fortunately timed, for, arriving after dark, its ponderous march, with the rolling artillery, must have impressed the enemy's cavalry, watching the approaches to their rear, with the idea of an immense army about to cut off their retreat, and contributed to cause that sudden collapse and stampede that soon after occurred, leaving us in possession of Malvern Hill, which the enemy might have held next day much to our detriment."

In reference to McClellan's childish and ridiculous appeal for 50,000 troops made to the Adjutant General, in his letter of July 1st, (since his impudent letter of the 28th he seemed to have ignored the Secretary of War) the President on the 2nd, thus addressed him: "Your dispatch of Tuesday morning induces me to hope your army is having some rest. In this hope allow me to reason with you a moment. When you ask for 50,000 men to be promptly sent you, you surely labor under some gross mistake of fact. Recently you sent papers showing your disposal of forces made last Spring for the defense of Washington and advising a return to that plan. I find it included in and about Washington 75,000 men.

Now please be assured I have not men enough to fill

that very plan by 15,000. All of Fremont's in the valley, all of Banks, all of McDowell's not with you, and all in Washington, taken together, do not exceed, if they reach, 60,000.

With Wool and Dix added to those I mentioned I have not, outside of your army, 75,000 men east of the mountains. Thus, the idea of sending you 50,000, or any other considerable force, promptly is simply absurd. If, in your frequent mention of responsibility, you have the impression that I blame you for not doing more than you can, please be relieved of such impression. I only beg that in like manner you will not ask impossibilities of me. ”

The same day, General McClellan telegraphed the President from “Harrison's Bar”: I have succeeded in getting this army to this place on the banks of the James River, I have lost but one gun, which had to be abandoned last night because it broke down. An hour and a half ago the rear of the wagon train was within a mile of camp, and only one wagon abandoned. As usual, we had a severe battle yesterday and beat the enemy badly, the men fighting even better than before. They are in good spirits, and after a little rest will fight better than ever. If not attacked during this day I will have the men ready to repulse the enemy to-morrow ”

For the truth of history, it will be proper to here introduce, in refutation of General McClellan's rosy report of his brilliant achievements, an extract from the official report of General Robert E. Lee, commanding the “Army of Northern Virginia,” regarding the Seven days battle before Richmond.

In speaking of the results accomplished by his army during those engagements he says: “ . . . but regret that more was not accomplished gives way to gratitude to the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe for the results

achieved. The siege of Richmond was raised, and the object of a campaign, which had been prosecuted after months of preparation at an enormous expenditure of men and money, completely frustrated. More than 10,000 prisoners . . . 52 pieces of artillery, and upwards of 35,000 stands of small arms were captured. The stores and supplies of every description which fell into our hands were great in amount and value, but small in comparison with those destroyed by the enemy."

On the 4th of July, 1862, General McClellan issued another one of his periodical proclamations to the army, wherein, in grandiloquent and high sounding terms he predicted glorious results for the future with dire disaster to the enemy. His proclamation was as follows:

"Soldiers of the Army of the Potomac."

"Your achievements of the last ten days have illustrated the valor and endurance of the American soldier. Attacked by vastly superior forces, and without hope of re-enforcements, you have succeeded in changing your base of operations by a flank movement, always regarded as the most hazardous of military expedients. You have saved all your material, all your trains, and all your guns, except a few lost in battle, taking in return guns and colors from the enemy.

Upon your march you have been assailed day after day with desperate fury by men of the same race and nation skillfully massed and led; and under every disadvantage of numbers, and necessarily of position also, you have in every conflict beaten back your foes with enormous slaughter.

Your conduct ranks you among the celebrated armies of history. No one will now question that each of you may always say with pride, "I belonged to the Army of the Potomac!"

You have reached this new base complete in organ-

ization and unimpaired in spirit. The enemy may at any moment attack you. We are prepared to receive them. I have personally established your lines. Let them come, and we will convert their repulse into a final defeat. Your Government is strengthening you with the resources of a great people.

On this our nation's birthday we declare to our foes, who are rebels against the best interests of mankind, that this army shall enter the capital of their so-called confederacy; that our National Constitution shall prevail, and that the Union, which can alone insure internal peace and external security to each State, must and shall be preserved, cost what it may in time, treasure and blood."

In strict harmony with the pretensions of this proclamation while waiting for "another attack," at midnight of July 5th he issued the following business like and ostentatious order to his several corps commanders: "The general commanding has information from a prisoner that Lee, Johnston, Longstreet, Jackson, etc., are within 4 miles of us. If this is true we may probably expect an attack to-morrow. . . . Have your troops under arms a little before daylight, batteries harnessed, and cavalry saddled. . . . Hold your own as long as possible, without calling your own reserves into action or sending for the general's reserves, as it is the desire of the general commanding to follow up, with the reserves the repulse of the enemy, which he believes will be the certain consequence of an attack upon us in our present position. . . . Your position must be held at any cost. and you will be supported to any necessary extent. ."

The full weight and value of these warlike preparations will be the better appreciated from the following communication from General Lee of the same date, to Jefferson Davis, "From the conflicting and exaggerated reports of the enemy I conclude that he has been re-enforced, and

there are besides indications that it may be his purpose to make a lodgement on the James River as a base of further operations. . . . The great obstacle to operations here is the presence of the enemy's gun boats, which protect our approaches to him, and should we even force him from his positions on his land front, would prevent us from reaping the fruits of victory. . . . These considerations induce the opinion that it may be better to leave a small, light force with the cavalry here and retire the army near Richmond. . . ."

On July 8th, President Lincoln visited the army at Harrison's Landing and on the 11th General McClellan sent him the following telegram:

"The enemy have certainly retreated, but it has been in good order and with a fair amount of wagons. . . . Prisoners all state that I had 200,000 enemy to fight, a good deal more than two to one, and they knowing the ground."

The strength of McClellan's army according to his official returns on July 10th was

Grand total, aggregate present, 117,714; grand total, aggregate present and absent, 157,038; Field pieces of artillery, 335; and of the Army of Northern Virginia on the same date "aggregate present for duty, exclusive of the Department of North Carolina, 65,419. (The troops of the Department of North Carolina consisted of about 14,000 men.)

On the same date the Secretary of War sent the following telegram to Major General Halleck at Corinth: "The President has this day made the following order, which I hasten to communicate to you."

"Ordered, that Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck be assigned to command the whole land forces of the United States as General-in-Chief and that he repair to this

capital so soon as he can with safety to the positions and operations within the department under his charge.”

“You will please acknowledge the receipt of this order, and state when you may be expected here. Your early presence is required by many circumstances.”

On the 14th the President telegraphed to General Halleck as follows: “I am very anxious—almost impatient—to have you here. Have due regard to what you leave behind. When can you reach here?”

Since the time of the appointment of General McClellan to the command of the Army of the Potomac,—so far as it was possible to do so—his opinions, judgment, and wishes in all matters respecting its personnel and movements were literally adhered to and carried out. He was the recognized military authority, and whatever he advised was acquiesced in and his directions and wishes obeyed. The appointment therefore, of General Halleck, as the military adviser of the Government, from whom thereafter he would receive commands, was, under the circumstances naturally distasteful and obnoxious to him of which fact subsequent events clearly prove that he was not slow or over scrupulous in resenting.

Major General Pope was at this time in command of the troops in, and in front of Washington for the defense of the capital and some of his suggestions and actions were additional and potent causes in arousing McClellan’s bitter jealousy and displeasure.

General Halleck arrived in Washington, and assumed the duties of his position on the 23rd day of July 1862, and on the 25th day of that month, by direction of the President he visited General McClellan in his camp at Harrison’s Landing when he advised him as “a military necessity,” to either concentrate his army with that of General Pope or, make an attack upon Richmond. Mc-

Clellan, after a consultation held with his officers chose the latter plan.

On July 30th General Halleck sent the following telegram to General McClellan: "A dispatch just received from General Pope says that deserters report that the enemy is moving south of James River and that the force in Richmond is very small. I suggest he be pressed in that direction so as to ascertain the facts of the case." And in another dispatch of the same date he said: "In order to enable you to move in any direction, it is necessary to relieve you of your sick. The Surgeon-General has therefore been directed to make arrangements for them at other places, and the Quarter-Master-General to provide transportation. I hope you will send them away as quickly as possible and advise me of their removal."

Again on the following day General Halleck telegraphed him, "General Pope again telegraphs that the enemy is reported to be evacuating Richmond and falling back on Danville and Lynchburg."

To these commands of General Halleck, while making a pretense of compliance, McClellan as usual found abundant reasons for not carrying into effect while meantime he was clamoring for re-enforcements and Richmond was being evacuated for the purpose of menacing Pope in front of Washington.

Finally on the 3rd of August, General Halleck telegraphed him as follows: "I have waited most anxiously to learn the results of your forced reconnaissance toward Richmond, and also whether all your sick have been sent away, and I can get no answer to my telegram. It is determined to withdraw your army from the Peninsula to Aquia Creek. You will take immediate measures to effect this, covering the movement the best you can. Its real object and withdrawal should be concealed even from



your own officers. Your material and transportation should be removed first. . . .”

The next day General McClellan responded as follows: “Your telegram of last evening is received. I must confess that it has caused me the greatest pain I ever experienced, for I am convinced that the order to withdraw this army to Aquia Creek will prove disastrous to our cause. I fear it will be a fatal blow. . . . I entreat that this order may be rescinded. If my counsel does not prevail, I will with a sad heart obey your orders to the utmost of my power. . . .”

On August 2nd General Halleck had sent him this peremptory telegram: “You have not answered my telegram of July 30 about the removal of your sick. Remove them as rapidly as possible and telegraph me when they will be out of your way. The President wishes an answer as early as possible.” To this dispatch, McClellan in his reply said: “. . . . It is impossible for me to decide what cases to send off unless I know what is to be done with this army. . . . Until I am informed what is to be done I cannot act understandingly or for the good of the service. If I am kept longer in ignorance of what is to be effected, I cannot be expected to accomplish the object in view. . . .”

This impudent reply of McClellan's, drew from General Halleck the following response on August 4th:

“My telegram to you of yesterday will satisfy you in regard to future operations. It was expected that you would have sent off your sick as directed without waiting to know what were or would be the intentions of the Government respecting future movements. The President expects that the instructions which were sent you yesterday with his approval will be carried out with all possible dispatch and caution. . . .”

The movement for the withdrawal of the Army of the

Potomac from the Peninsula, was not commenced until August 14th.

Thus was terminated in disgraceful failure the campaign on the Peninsula; begun in stubborn opposition to the wise and far-sighted judgment of President Lincoln, yet, under the most favorable conditions in which any army ever started out, involving the expenditure of thousands of noble lives and many millions in treasure.

The scene now changes from the siege of Richmond to the defense of Washington, and from what has already been seen of the character and disposition of General McClellan, with him as yet, an important factor in those operations, it is not difficult to foresee how that campaign would end.

## CHAPTER VII

### GENERAL POPE'S CAMPAIGN IN VIRGINIA

Formation of the Army of Virginia—Assignment of General Pope to its command—He assumes command—His indiscreet address to his army—His character—The purpose of the President—Pope's advent not agreeable to McClellan—His qualities contrasted with McClellan's—The latter's supineness feared by Pope—The duty enjoined of Pope—Halleck's letter to McClellan—The enemy leaving McClellan to crush Pope—Carelessness in the Quarter-Master's Department—Halleck approves of Pope's movements and enjoins him to stand firm—He urges every possible effort be made to push McClellan's troops to Pope—Strength of Pope's forces—McClellan's message to Porter—His letter to Burnside—Halleck enjoins Pope to dispute every inch of ground and "fight like the devil"—Promises re-enforcements—Porter arrives at Falmouth—Ordered to join Pope—McClellan reports his arrival at Aquia Creek and expects to command Pope's army—Directed to go to Alexandria—Pope kept busy—His letter to Halleck—He chafes under orders which require him to remain on the defensive—He asks about his command and what is expected of him—Re-enforcements coming to him in fragments—Franklin ordered to Warrenton to report to Pope—Porter's dispatch to Burnside—His ridicule of Pope and criticism of his orders—He wishes to get away from Pope.

**O**N the 26th day of June, 1862, President Lincoln issued the following order, to wit:

“Ordered, 1st, The forces under Major Generals Fremont, Banks and McDowell, including the troops now under Brigadier General Sturges at Washington, shall be consolidated and form one army, to be called the “Army of Virginia.”

2nd. The command of the Army of Virginia is specially assigned to Maj. General John Pope as commanding general. . . .

3rd. The Army of Virginia shall operate in such manner as while protecting Western Virginia and the national capital from danger or insult, it shall in the speediest manner attack and overcome the rebel forces under Jack-



*W. R. R.*



son and Ewell, threaten the enemy in the direction of Charlottesville, and render the most effective aid to relieve General McClellan and capture Richmond.

4th. When the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Virginia shall be in position to communicate and directly co-operate at or before Richmond, the chief command, while so operating together, shall be governed, as in like cases, by the rules and articles of war.”

General Pope arrived in Washington and in compliance with this order, assumed his command, and on the 14th day of July issued to his army the following address:

“To the officers and soldiers of the Army of Virginia:

By special assignment of the President of the United States I have assumed command of this Army.

I have spent two weeks in learning your whereabouts, your condition, and your wants, in preparing you for active operations, and placing you in positions from which you can act promptly and to the purpose.

These labors are nearly completed, and I am about to join you in the field. Let us understand each other.

I have come to you from the West, where we have always seen the backs of our enemies; and from an army whose business it has been to seek the adversary and to beat him when he was found; whose policy has been attack and not defense.

In but one instance has the enemy been able to place our western armies in defensive attitude.

I presume that I have been called here to pursue the same system and to lead you against the enemy. It is my purpose to do so, and that speedily.

I am sure you long for an opportunity to win the distinction you are capable of achieving. That opportunity I shall endeavor to give you.

Meantime I desire you to dismiss from your minds

certain phrases, which I am sorry to find so much in vogue amongst you. I hear constantly of 'taking strong positions and holding them,' of 'lines of retreat' and of 'bases of supplies.' Let us discard such ideas. Let us study the probable lines of retreat of our opponents, and leave our own to take care of themselves.

Let us look before us, and not behind. Success and glory are in the advance, disaster and shame lurk in the rear. "

General Pope was a man of undoubted energy and courage, who, having displayed considerable military skill and ability in the campaigns of the western armies, the urgent need of which qualities,—had doubtless been the reason for summoning him to the command of the troops in and around Washington.

The evident purpose of the President by his action as intimated in his order, was not alone the defense of Washington, but the co-operation and eventual union of the Army of Virginia with that of McClellan's, and the capture of Richmond.

The condition of affairs however, as has been seen were rapidly changing; they had become reversed, and instead of Pope being able to help McClellan, the resolutely prolonged passiveness of the latter had made it imperatively necessary for the withdrawal of his army from the Peninsula, and of its speedy return to the assistance of Pope in the defense of the capital.

The appearance on the scene of operations of a rival general—a possible successful competitor for military glory—was undoubtedly not agreeable to the feelings of General McClellan, and in addition, the very indiscreet address of General Pope to his army, while it only stated true conditions, was foolishly egotistical and boastful, and besides, reflected very disparagingly and uncomplimentary on the conduct in the past of some of his brother

officers; for all of which offenses, not only he, but the whole nation as well, was doomed to pay a cruel and terrible penalty.

That General Pope was a determined fighter, may be inferred from the following correspondence. On July 15th, he received the following dispatch from Brig. Gen. A. Sanders Piatt at Winchester: "The Garibaldi Regiment with one company of cavalry . . . were attacked this evening by three columns of rebel cavalry supported by infantry . . . and after a sharp engagement had to fall back; two men wounded and 4 missing . . ."

To this, Gen. Piatt received the following characteristic reply the following day: "Your dispatch received. A regiment of infantry in such a country is more than a match for a dozen regiments of cavalry, and ought never to retreat before them. Neither do I quite understand your calling an affair in which two men were wounded a "sharp engagement." I hope you will infuse a much bolder spirit in your men. The idea of retreating before a cavalry force with only two men wounded, is hardly up to the standard of soldiership. . . I do not like the idea of an infantry regiment of this army retreating without more loss and better reasons than are set forth in your dispatch."

On July 30th General Pope reported to General Halleck from Warrenton as follows: "Reports from several different sources represent the enemy to be leaving Richmond and crossing James River with their heavy artillery. Enemy gradually withdrawing in front of me.

I am pushing forward strong reconnaissances to Gordonsville to-day and will go to the front to-morrow, and advance whole force to line of Rapidan as fast as practicable. . . ."

On August 9th General Halleck telegraphed to General



Dix at Falmouth: "I fear the enemy may attack Pope in large force. Be ready at a moments notice to co-operate with him . . ."

August 11th General Pope reported to General Halleck: . . . The enemy is massed on the summit and sides of Cedar mountain in front of me, about 3 miles. . . . From everything I can learn, I am satisfied that one-third of the enemy's whole force is here, and more will be arriving unless McClellan will, at least keep them busy and uneasy at Richmond. Captured officers speak freely of General McClellan's move back from Malvern Hill the other day. They say that their skirmishers drove in our pickets in the afternoon, and next morning at daylight they found to their surprise that our forces were gone. Of the force left there nearly one half is on the south side of the James River. Deserters' escaped prisoners and spies, all concur in the statement that not more than 40,000 troops are on the north side of James River. Please have McClellan do something to prevent re-enforcements being sent here. I am able to get along with those that are here now. General Stuart himself with his whole cavalry force is here."

The conditions stated in the foregoing dispatch, correctly corresponds to those heretofore noted, as existing in McClellan's army. While in its tone as will be noted it is in marked contrast to the dispatches of the latter. While McClellan was always complaining about the great odds'' continually confronting him and with whom he would be obliged to contend, and appealing and waiting for re-enforcements to reach him, General Pope manifests no hesitation about getting into action and only expresses a reasonable desire that the same tactics pursued by the enemy may be used in his behalf by preventing large re-enforcements reaching them.

In a later dispatch of the same date to General Halleck,

General Pope says: "In compliance with your telegraph of this date I shall place my command in favorable position in this immediate vicinity (Cedar Mountain) to operate on the enemy's communications. The only hazard in such policy is that supineness of the Army of the Potomac renders it easy for the enemy to re-enforce Jackson heavily. Of that however you must be the judge."

General Pope had been ordered to hold the line of the Upper Rappahannock that the enemy might be delayed long enough in their advance upon Washington, to enable McClellan's army to land and effect a junction with him.

It will be remembered that immediately after General Halleck had arrived in Washington he visited and interviewed General McClellan in his camp at Harrison's Landing, and that upon his return to Washington, he issued on August 3rd a peremptory order for the immediate withdrawal of the Army of the Potomac from the Peninsula, to which order General McClellan strenuously objected. On August 6th, General Halleck wrote him a lengthy letter in reply to his telegram from which the following extracts will not be without interest as tending to shed some light on subsequent movements. They are as follows: "Your telegram of yesterday was received this morning, and I immediately telegraphed a brief reply, promising to write you more fully by mail. You, general, certainly could not have been more pained at receiving my order than I was at the necessity of issuing it. I was advised by high officers in whose judgment I had great confidence to make the order immediately upon my arrival here, but I determined not to do so until I could learn your wishes from a personal interview, and even after that interview I tried every means in my power to avoid withdrawing your army, and delayed my decision as long as I dared to delay it. I assure you general it was not a hasty and inconsiderate act, but one that caused me

more anxious thought than any other of my life. But after full and mature consideration of all the pros and cons, I was reluctantly forced to the conclusion that the order must be issued. There was to my mind no alternative. Allow me to allude to a few facts in the case. . . . General Pope's army now covering Washington is only 40,000. Your effective force is only about 90,000. You are 30 miles from Richmond and General Pope 80 or 90 with the enemy directly between you, ready to fall with his superior numbers upon one or the other, as he may elect. Neither can re-enforce the other in case of such an attack. . . . In other words the Army of the Potomac is split into two parts, with the entire force of the enemy directly between them. They cannot be united by land without exposing both to destruction, and yet they must be united. . . .

You say that to withdraw from the present position will cause the certain demoralization of the army "which is now in excellent discipline and condition." I cannot understand why a simple change of position to a new, and by no means distant, base will demoralize an army in excellent discipline, unless the officers themselves assist in that demoralization, which I am satisfied they will not. A new base on the Rappahannock brings you within about 60 miles of Richmond, and secures a re-enforcement of 40,000 or 50,000 fresh and disciplined troops. The change with such advantages will, I think, if properly represented to your army, encourage rather than demoralize your troops.

The political effect of the withdrawal may at first be unfavorable, but I think the public are beginning to understand its necessity, and that they will have much more confidence in a united army than in its separate fragments.

But you will reply, why not re-enforce me here, so

that I can strike Richmond from my present position? To do this you said at our interview that you required 50,000 additional troops. I told you that it was impossible to give you so many. You finally thought you would have "some chance" of success with 20,000. But you afterward telegraphed to me that you would require 35,000. . . . To keep your army in its present position until it could be so re-enforced would almost destroy it in that climate. The months of August and September are almost fatal to whites who live on that part of James River. And even after you got the re-enforcements asked for, you admitted you must reduce Fort Darling, . . . It is by no means certain that the reduction of these fortifications would not require considerable time, perhaps as much as those at Yorktown. . . .

In regard to the demoralizing effect of a withdrawal . . . a large number of your highest officers . . . are decidedly in favor of it. . . .

I have not inquired and do not desire to know by whose advice or for what reasons the army of the Potomac was separated into two parts, with the enemy between them. I must take things as I find them. I find the forces divided and I wish to unite them. Only one feasible plan has been presented.

If you or anyone else had presented a better one, I certainly should have adopted it. It is very easy to ask for re-enforcements, but it is not so easy to give them when you have no disposable troops at your command. . . ."

August 12th, General Pope telegraphed to General Halleck from Cedar Mountain: "The enemy has been receiving re-enforcements all day. . . . I think it almost certain that we shall be attacked in the morning, and we shall make the best fight we can."

The same date General Halleck telegraphed him: "It has just been suggested that . . . you should remove

your rolling stock this side of the Rappahannock. General Burnside will move to-day to re-enforce you. I am doing everything in my power to hasten McClellan's movements."

On the 13th, General Halleck telegraphed Pope at Culpeper: "Do not advance your force across the Rapidan. Burnside's re-enforcements will reach you to-night or to-morrow morning by the Rappahannock. . . . You will retain the supreme command."

On the 16th, General Pope reported: "My whole force was advanced and is posted near the Rapidan. It is impossible, without crossing the river to establish the camps near it. . . . The enemy is nearly in his old camps.

. . . Unless he has received re-enforcements he will not stand. According to your instructions I shall not cross Rapidan for the present but will make strong reconnaissance and demonstration toward Louisa Court House

The weak point of my position is the left. There is danger that forces coming from Richmond may unite with Jackson . . . and thus interpose between me and Fredericksburg . . . "

The same day General Halleck replied: "I think it would be very unsafe for your army to cross the Rapidan. It would be far better if you were in rear of the Rappahannock. We must run no risks just now, but must concentrate, so as to secure full co-operation. . . . If threatened too strongly, fall behind the Rappahannock. Every possible exertion is being made to increase our forces on that line . . . "

General Pope this day sent the following telegram to Quartermaster General Meigs: "There has been the grossest possible carelessness somewhere in the Quartermaster's Department in the matter of furnishing forage to my army. Although only 70 or 80 miles from Alexandria, I cannot get forage for my cavalry; and now at the

moment I most need it this arm of service is paralyzed by the neglect of some quartermaster. I desire that the quartermaster at Alexandria may be called to account and made to explain who is culpable in the matter."

On the 18th, he telegraphed General Halleck: "The enemy, heavily re-enforced, is advancing on Raccoon Ford from Gordonsville, . . . All the Richmond force has been thrown in this direction to turn my left. I am not able to resist it without being cut off from Fredericksburg and Manassas. I have accordingly, in compliance with your instructions, started back all my trains to pass the Rappahannock to-night. My whole command will commence to fall back to that line to-night . . . Please advise me at once if you wish other dispositions made."

General Halleck replied: "I fully approve your move. I hope to push a part of Burnside's force to near Burnett's Ford by to-morrow night, . . . Stand firm on that line until I can help you. Fight hard, and aid will soon come."

The same day General Halleck telegraphed General Dix at Fort Monroe: "It is now pretty well ascertained that the enemy is moving in large force against General Pope. Every possible effort should be made to push forward re-enforcements. Not a moment should be lost. Employ everything that can be procured for transports. Send copy to General McClellan."

On the following day he likewise telegraphed to General McClellan at Fort Monroe: . . . The enemy is moving in great force across the Rapidan. It is of vital importance that you send forward troops as rapidly as possible. . . . We want immediately all the men that can possibly be sent, leaving the material which is not absolutely necessary to follow more leisurely."

On the 20th, General Halleck informed Pope that "Porter's Corps is beginning to arrive at Aquia Creek. It will

be under the command of General Burnside for the present. It will be pushed up the Rappahannock as rapidly as possible. . . .”

And in another dispatch he said, “I think your staff is decidedly leaky. The substance of my telegrams to you is immediately telegraphed back here to the press. . . . Clean out all such characters from your headquarters. It is useless to attempt any sending of orders if you permit them to be made public as soon as you receive them.”

To this latter dispatch General Pope replied: “I am much surprised to receive your dispatch . . . I have permitted no messages, even from army corps commanders to be sent over the lines without inspection by myself. . . . Not more than two of my staff and the army corps commanders concerned have ever had your orders communicated to them. There is, and has been much laxity about all official business in this army, and I am endeavoring to correct it as fast as possible. . . . It is possible that the orders to which you refer have been made public by the army corps commanders to whom portions at least have been necessarily communicated. The several corps composing this army have until recently acted quite independently, and it is difficult to put a stop to practices which have prevailed hitherto.”

On the same date General Pope reported to General Halleck: “. . . That you may know exactly my condition I append a statement of my effective force. General McDowell’s corps, 18,000 men; Sigel’s, 12,000; Banks’, 7,000; Reno’s, 8,000, making 45,000 men for duty. . . . For entire security I shall send back all my trains to Catlett’s Station, and rely upon the railroad to deliver supplies from time to time. Our true position, as it seems to me, should the enemy advance with his whole force, would be considerably in rear of the Rappahannock, until we are strong enough to advance. But I presume my position

here is regulated by the arrival of McClellan's forces on the Lower Rappahannock. . . . You may rely upon our making a very hard fight in case the enemy advances on us. . . . I would suggest that General Porter be pushed up at once to Barnett's Ford."

On August 20th, General McClellan at Fort Monroe telegraphed as follows to General Porter: "Please send off your troops without one moment's delay. The necessity is very pressing—a matter of life and death . . . , see me before you sail."

The following "confidential" letter on this date, from General McClellan addressed to General Ambrose E. Burnside may not be without interest.

"Fort Monroe, Va., Aug. 20, 1862.

"My dear Burn.: You will have learned ere this that our movement in retreat was most successfully accomplished, without loss and without abandoning any property.

"Since my arrival here I have received a couple of telegrams from Halleck indicating that Pope was in danger, and urging that re-enforcements be sent on as rapidly as possible. I am pushing everything; not a moment is being lost, and it shall not be my fault if the troops do not arrive in time. Yesterday and to-day I have received intelligence from confidential sources leading me to think it probable that Halleck either will not or cannot carry out his intentions in regard to my position, as expressed to you. This shall make no difference with me. I shall push on everything just as if I were to remain in command. Please keep me posted as to all you know. . . . I send this by special messenger."

August 20th, General Pope telegraphed General Halleck from Rappahannock Station: "I shall mass my whole force along what is known as Marsh Run about 2 1-2 or 3 miles northeast of Rappahannock Ford



If the enemy attempt to turn my right . . . they will probably march direct on Warrenton . . . Such a movement, however, will expose their flank and rear, and you may be sure I shall not lose the opportunity. . . . What relations with me will the corps of Fitz John Porter have? I should like to know exactly, I am going out to post my command. . . . ”

On the 21st, General Halleck telegraphed: “ . . . General Cox’s forces are coming on from Parkersburg, and will be here tomorrow and the next day. Dispute every inch of ground, and fight like the devil till we can re-enforce you. Forty-eight hours more and we can make you strong enough. Don’t yield an inch if you can help it.”

The following day General Pope reported: “ . . . Enemy was crossing river to-day at Sulphur and on the road from Warrenton to Sperryville. He is still in heavy force at Rappahannock Ford and above, and my rear is entirely exposed if I move toward Sulphur Springs or Warrenton. I must do one of two things—either fall back behind Cedar Run, or cross the Rappahannock with my whole force and assail the enemy’s flank and rear. I must do one or the other at daylight. Which shall it be? I incline to the latter, but don’t wish to interfere with your plans.”

To this General Halleck replied: “I think the latter of your two propositions the best. . . . ”

On the 22nd of August, General Burnside, at Falmouth, reported to the President that, “Porter is here with nearly all of his corps. The remainder will probably be here by 12 o’clock to-day.” The same day General Halleck telegraphed Burnside: “The enemy seems to be moving the mass of their forces toward Warrenton to turn Pope’s right. It is therefore important that Porter’s corps should move up as rapidly as possible. Direct him and

all other commanders to subsist their men and forage their animals as much as possible on the country . . . .”

General McClellan arrived at Aquia Creek August 24th when he immediately reported his arrival to General Halleck, and later in the day again telegraphed: “ . . . . Morell’s scouts report Rappahannock Station burned and abandoned by Pope, without any notice to Morell or Sykes. . . . Morell and Sykes are . . . watching the lower fords of the Rappahannock, with no troops between them and Rappahannock Station, which is reported abandoned by Pope. Please inform me immediately exactly where Pope is and what doing; until I know that I cannot regulate Porter’s movements. He is much exposed now and decided measures should be taken at once.

Until I know what my command and position are to be, and whether you still intend to place me in the command indicated in your first letter to me and orally through General Burnside at the Chickahominy, I cannot decide where I can be of most use. If your determination is unchanged I ought to go to Alexandria at once. Please define my position and duties.”

To this General Halleck replied: “You ask me for information which I cannot give. I do not know either where General Pope is or where the enemy in force is. These are matters which I have all day been most anxious to ascertain.” And on the 26th, he told him: “ . . . . Perhaps you had better leave General Burnside in charge at Aquia Creek and come to Alexandria, as very great irregularities are reported there. General Franklin’s corps will march as soon as it receives transportation.”

From the preceding dispatches it will be seen that in all of the movements of General Pope he was strictly obeying orders, and, that under very great difficulties, his army was being continually kept in motion. On the 25th of August, he sent the following dispatch to General Halleck

which will throw some light on the conditions as they then existed, and of the unsatisfactory position in which he found himself

In reply to a dispatch from General Halleck he said:  
 “ . . . Of course I shall be ready to recross the Rappahannock at a moment’s notice . . . . You wished forty eight hours to assemble the forces from the Peninsula behind the Rappahannock, and four days have passed without the enemy yet being permitted to cross. . .

I had clearly understood that you wished to unite our whole forces before a forward movement was begun, and that I must take care to keep united with Burnside on my left, so that no movement to separate us could be made. This withdrew me lower down the Rappahannock than I wished to come. I am not acquainted with your views, as you seem to suppose, and would be glad to know them as far as my own position and operations are concerned. I understood you clearly that at all hazards I was to prevent the enemy from passing the Rappahannock. This I have done and shall do. I don’t like to be on the defensive if I can help it, but must be so as long as I am tied to Burnside’s forces, not yet wholly arrived at Fredericksburg. Please let me know, if it can be done, what is to be my own command, and if I am to act independently against the enemy

I certainly understood that as soon as the whole of our forces were concentrated you designed to take command in person, and that when everything was ready we were to move forward in concert. I judge from the tone of your dispatch that you are dissatisfied with something. Unless I know what it is, of course I cannot correct it. The troops arriving here come in fragments. Am I to assign them to brigades and corps? . . . . In case I commence

offensive operations, I must know what forces I am to take and what you wish left and what connection must be

kept up with Burnside. It has been my purpose to conform my operations to your plans, yet, I was not informed when McClellan evacuated Harrison's Landing, so that I might know what to expect in that direction, and when I say these things in no complaining spirit I think you know well that I am anxious to do everything to advance your plans of campaign.

I understood that this army was to maintain the line of the Rappahannock until all the forces from the Peninsula had united behind that river. I have done so. I understood distinctly that I was not to hazard anything except for this purpose, as delay was what was wanted. . . ."

To the foregoing dispatch General Halleck replied as follows: "Not the slightest dissatisfaction has been felt in regard to your operations on the Rappahannock. The main object has been accomplished in getting up troops ~~time our animals must be rendered totally unserviceable~~ from the Peninsula, although they have been greatly delayed by storms. Moreover, the telegraph has been interrupted, leaving us for a time ignorant of the progress of the evacuation. Just think of the immense amount of telegraphing I have to do, and then say whether I can be expected to give you any details as to movements of others, even when I know them.

Franklin's corps is at Alexandria, and will march as soon as the wagons arrive. . . . If possible to attack the enemy in flank do so, but the main object now is to ascertain his position. . . . If possible to get in his rear, pursue with vigor."

On the same date of the foregoing dispatch to General Pope, August 26, General Halleck telegraphed to General Franklin at Alexandria as follows: "You will march your corps by Centreville toward Warrenton, reporting to General Pope in the absence of General McClellan from the immediate field of operations."

Major General Fitz John Porter, who had arrived at Warrenton, on August 27th, sent a dispatch to General Burnside at Falmouth which will illustrate the feelings he entertained towards General Pope. It was as follows: "Morell left his medicine, ammunition and baggage at Kelly's Ford. Can you have it hauled to Fredericksburg and stored? His wagons are all sent to you for grain and ammunition. I have sent back to you every man of the First and Sixth New York Cavalry, except what has been sent to Gainesville. . . . Everything here is at sixes and sevens, and I find I am to take care of myself in every respect. Our line of communication has taken care of itself in compliance with orders. The army has not three days provisions. The enemy captured all Pope's and other clothing, and from McDowell the same, including liquors. No guard accompanying the train and small ones guard bridges. The wagons are rolling on, and I shall be here to-morrow. Good night."

On the morning of the 27th, General Pope had issued a general order for a forward movement of his army on that day. In a later dispatch that afternoon to General Burnside, General Porter had this to say in reference to it: "I send you the last order from General Pope which indicates the future as well as the present. Wagons are rolling along rapidly to the rear, as if a mighty power was propelling them. I see no cause for alarm, though I think this order may cause it. McDowell moves to Gainesville, where Sigel now is. The latter got to Buckland Bridge in time to put out the fire and kick the enemy who is pursuing his route to the Shenandoah or Loudon County. The forces are Longstreet's, A. P. Hill's, Jackson's, Whiting's, Ewell's, and Anderson's (late Huger's) divisions. No troops are coming up, except new troops, that I can hear of . . . I find a vast difference between these troops and ours, but I suppose they

were new, as to-day they burnt their clothes, etc., when there was not the least cause. I hear that they are much demoralized, and needed some good troops to give them heart, and I think head. We are working now to get behind Bull Run, and I presume will be there in a few days, if strategy don't use us up. The strategy is magnificent, and tactics in inverse proportion. . . . I wish Sumner was at Washington, and up near the Monocacy, with good batteries. I do not doubt the enemy have large amounts of supplies provided for them, and I believe they have a contempt for this army of Virginia.

“I wish myself away from it, with all our old Army of the Potomac, and so do our companions. I was informed to-day, by the best authority, that, in opposition to General Pope's views, this army was pushed out to save the Army of the Potomac—an army that could take care of itself . . .

Most of this is private, but if you can get me away please do so, make what use of this you choose, so it does good. . . .”

## CHAPTER VIII

Difference between Pope and McClellan's tactics—Supplies for Pope withheld—His animals dying for want of forage—The enemy concentrating to cut him off—Pope orders Porter to be at Bristoe Station by daylight—Hooker in a severe action—Pope plans a rapid movement—Halleck repeats his orders to Franklin—McClellan interposes excuse for delay—Halleck orders "not a moment must be lost in pushing Franklin to Pope"—McClellan suggests more excuses for delay—Halleck orders "there must be no further delay, he must move, ready or not ready"—McClellan halts Franklin at Annandale—Halleck demands an explanation of his disobedience—McClellan assumes responsibility and alleges want of transportation—Halleck's timid rebuke—Shows the falsity of McClellan's statements—Secretary Stanton's inquiries—Halleck's report—His plans—The purpose of Pope's movements—The flagrant and contemptuous disobedience of McClellan and Franklin—Halleck's powers—His lack of efficiency—Pope's struggle—Anxiety in Washington—The President's inquiry—McClellan's heartless suggestions and covert bid for supremacy—The President's answer.

**F**ROM the tone and tenor of the foregoing communications of General Porter, it is not an unfair inference to suppose that his support of General Pope in his efforts, would be rather more perfunctory than enthusiastic.

As General Pope in his address to his army had proclaimed that he had come from "where they had always seen the backs of their enemies," and from "an army whose business it had been to seek the adversary," it is not very surprising that his methods and tactics,—so entirely foreign to those which General Porter had been so long habituated,—should not meet with his cordial endorsement. It will be remembered that both Generals Porter and Franklin had been the especial favorites of General McClellan while on the Peninsula, and with that circumstance in mind, in connection with what has heretofore been shown, the following reports will need no comment and will tell their own story.

For a clearer understanding however, of the condition of affairs as they existed at this particular time, and the trend of events which were following in rapid succession in General Pope's army, it will be proper to note the following dispatches from R. E. Clary, Brigade Quartermaster at Warrenton Junction, to the Quartermaster General at Washington, and from General Halleck to General Pope at the front.

On August 26th, the former telegraphed: Our animals are dying in their harness for want of forage. My calls upon Captain Ferguson are not complied with. The reason, I learn, is that there is none at Alexandria. No forage can be had in the country, not even hay in sufficient quantity. The railroad agents report that all the transportation called for has been furnished, yet Captain Ferguson states that he could not send forage for want of cars. Irregularity exists somewhere, and in the mean ~~time our animals must be rendered totally unserviceable~~ unless a supply of forage is speedily furnished.

On the 27th, General Halleck telegraphed: "The enemy is concentrating, it seems, between you and Alexandria, near Manassas and Bull Run. You must look out for this and immediately break it up, for your supplies must come from Washington, and you must fall back in this direction if compelled to retreat. Do not let him separate you from Alexandria. We will send out some troops to meet you, but we are very short of transportation. Keep me advised if possible."

At 6.30 p. m. on August 27, General Pope at Bristoe Station, through his chief of staff sent the following order to General Porter: "General: The major-general commanding directs that you start at 1 o'clock to-night and come forward with your whole corps, or such part of it as is with you, so as to be here at daylight to-morrow morning. Hooker has had a very severe action with the enemy, with a loss of about 300 killed and wounded. The enemy



has been driven back, and is retiring along the railroad. We must drive him from Manassas, and clear the country between that place and Gainesville where McDowell is. If Morell has not joined you, send word to him to push forward immediately. Also send word to Banks to hurry forward with all speed to take your place at Warrenton Junction. It is necessary on all accounts, that you should be here by daylight. I send an officer with this dispatch, who will conduct you to this place. Be sure to send word to Banks, who is on the road from Fayetteville, probably in the direction of Bealeton. Say to Banks also that he had best run back the railroad trains to this side of Cedar Run. If he is not with you write him to that effect."

On the same evening General Pope also sent the following dispatch to General Kearny: "At the very earliest blush of dawn push forward with your command with all speed to this place. You cannot be more than 3 or 4 miles distant. Jackson, A. P. Hill and Ewell are in front of us. Hooker has had a severe fight with them to-day. McDowell marches upon Manassas Junction from Gainesville to-morrow at day-break; Reno upon the same place at the same hour. I want you here at day dawn if possible, and we shall bag the whole crowd. Be prompt and expeditious, and never mind your wagon trains or roads till this affair is over. Lieutenant Brooks will deliver you this communication. He has one for General Reno, and one for General McDowell. Please have these dispatches sent forward instantly by a trusty staff officer, who will be sure to deliver them without fail, and make him bring back a receipt to you before daylight."

As before noted, General Halleck had on the 26th, ordered General Franklin to march his corps to Centreville. That evening General Franklin directed orders to issue to his command to start at 6 o'clock on the following morn-

ing, with two days rations in their haversacks. About one hour thereafter he countermanded this order.

On the 28th, General Halleck again telegraphed him as follows: "On parting with General McClellan, about 2 o'clock this morning, it was understood that you were to move with your corps to-day toward Manassas Junction, to drive the enemy from the railroad. I have just learned that the general has not yet returned to Alexandria. If you have not received his orders act on this."

To this dispatch General McClellan replied the same day: "Your dispatch to Franklin received. I have been doing all possible to hurry artillery and cavalry. The moment Franklin can be started with a reasonable amount of artillery he shall go."

Later in the afternoon Halleck again telegraphed: "Not a moment must be lost in pushing as large a force as possible toward Manassas, so as to communicate with Pope before the enemy is re-enforced. . . ." In response to this dispatch, General McClellan that evening telegraphed: "Your dispatch received. Neither Franklin nor Sumner's Corps is now in condition to move and fight a battle. It would be a sacrifice to send them out now. . . . I report that I will lose no time in preparing the troops now here for the field, and that whatever orders you may give after hearing what I have to say will be carried out."

To this General Halleck the same evening sent the following: "There must be no further delay in moving Franklin's Corps toward Manassas. They must go tomorrow morning, ready or not ready. If we delay too long to get ready there will be no necessity to go at all, for Pope will either be defeated or be victorious without our aid. If there is a want of wagons, the men must carry provisions with them until the wagons can come to their relief."

On the evening of the following day General Halleck

sent the following dispatch to McClellan: "You will immediately send constructing trains and guards to repair railroad to Manassas; let there be no delay in this. I have just been told that Franklin's Corps stopped at Anandale, and that he was this evening in Alexandria. This is all contrary to my orders; investigate and report the facts of this disobedience. That corps must push forward, as I directed, protect the railroad, and open our communications with Manassas."

To this General McClellan the same evening sent the following response: ". . . General Franklin remained here until about 1 p. m., endeavoring to arrange for supplies for his command. I am responsible for both these circumstances, and do not see that either was in disobedience to your orders. Please give distinct orders in reference to Franklin's movements of to-morrow." And again on the following morning he reported: "Ever since General Franklin received notice that he was to march from Alexandria he has been using every effort to get transportation for his extra ammunition, but he was uniformly told by the quartermasters here that there was none disposable, and his command marched without wagons. After the departure of his corps at 6 a. m. yesterday he procured 20 wagons, to carry a portion of his ammunition, by unloading some of General Banks' supply train for that purpose. . . . Every effort has been made to carry out your instructions promptly. The difficulty seems to consist in the fact that the greater part of the transportation on hand at Alexandria and Washington has been needed for current supplies of the garrisons. At all events such is the state of the case as represented to me by the quartermasters, and it appears to be true. I take it for granted that this has not been properly explained to you."

On the same morning General Halleck telegraphed him

as follows: "I am by no means satisfied with General Franklin's march of yesterday. Considering the circumstances of the case, he was very wrong in stopping at Annandale. Moreover, I learned last night that the Quartermasters' Department could have given him plenty of transportation, if he had applied for it, any time since his arrival at Alexandria. He knew the importance of opening communication with General Pope's army and should have acted more promptly."

On August 28th, Secretary Stanton addressed a letter to General Halleck as follows: "I desire you to furnish me information upon the following points:

1st. At what date you first ordered the general commanding the Army of the Potomac to move from James River.

2nd. Whether that order was or was not obeyed according to its purport with the promptness which, in your judgment, the national safety required, and at what date the movement commenced.

3rd. What order has been given recently for the movement of Franklin's corps, and whether it was obeyed as promptly as the national safety required. . . ."

To these interrogatories General Halleck on the 30th, replied as follows: . . .

1st. That on the 30th of July, I directed General McClellan to send away his sick as quickly as possible, preparatory to his moving in some direction. Receiving no answer, the order was repeated August 2. On the 3rd of August I directed him to withdraw his entire army from Harrison's Landing and bring it to Aquia Creek.

2nd. That the order was not obeyed with the promptness I expected and the national safety, in my opinion, required. It will be seen from my telegraphic correspondence that General McClellan protested against the move-

ment, and that it was not actually commenced till the 14th instant .

As shown in my correspondence, I was most earnestly pressing him to move quickly, for the reason that I felt very anxious for the safety of Washington. From all the information I could obtain I believed that the enemy intended to crush General Pope's army and attack this city.

I also believed that our only safety was to unite the two armies as rapidly as possible between the enemy and Washington. The object of pushing General Pope forward to the Rapidan was simply to gain time for General McClellan's army to get into position somewhere in rear of the Rappahannock.

This I at first hoped to accomplish by landing the troops of Generals Burnside and McClellan at Aquia Creek. But the time which elapsed between the arrival of these two armies compelled me to bring most of McClellan's forces to Alexandria, as General Pope was then falling back from the Upper Rappahannock before the main body of the enemy.

3d. That on the 26th of August, at 11.20 I telegraphed to Major General Franklin at Alexandria, to march his corps by Centreville toward Warrenton and to report to General Pope. Finding that Franklin's corps had not left, I telegraphed to General McClellan on the 27th, at 10 a. m., to have it march in the direction of Manassas as soon as possible.

On the same day at 12 m. I again telegraphed to General McClellan that General Porter reported a general battle imminent, and that Franklin's corps should move out by forced marches, carrying three or four days provisions; to be afterwards supplied, as far as possible by railroad. I also gave him the positions of General Pope's troops as well as I could ascertain them, and suggested the possibility that the enemy would attempt to turn his

right. At 9 p. m. General McClellan telegraphed that he should retain Cox with General Franklin till next morning, and would visit my headquarters immediately. He came to my quarters soon after midnight, and left about 2 o'clock in the morning of the 28th.

At our interview I urged on him the importance of pushing forward Franklin as early as possible. Hearing about noon that General McClellan had not reached Alexandria, I telegraphed, at 12.40 p. m. (28th) to General Franklin, if he had not acted on General McClellan's order to do so on mine, and move toward Manassas Junction. At 1 p. m. General McClellan telegraphed to me that the moment Franklin could be started with a reasonable amount of artillery he should go forward.

At 2.45 he telegraphed some rumors he had heard about the enemy's movement and expressed an opinion that the troops sent from Alexandria should be in force, and with cavalry and artillery, or we should be beaten in detail.

I replied at 3.30 p. m. that not a moment must be lost in pushing as large a force as possible towards Manassas, so as to communicate with General Pope before the enemy could be re-enforced.

He telegraphed back at 4.45 that Franklin's corps was not in condition to move and fight a battle. At 8.45 I telegraphed to him that there must be no further delay in moving Franklin's corps toward Manassas—that they must go to-morrow morning ready or not ready. If we delay too long to get ready there will be no necessity of going at all, for Pope will either be defeated or victorious without our aid. If there is a want of wagons, the men must carry provisions with them till the wagons can come to their relief.

At 10 he replied that he had ordered Franklin's corps to move at 6 o'clock. On the morning of the 29th, at 10.30

he telegraphed to me that Franklin's corps had started at 6 a. m. and that he could give him but two squadrons of cavalry. At 12 m. he telegraphed that Franklin's corps was without proper ammunition and without transportation; and again at 1 p. m. he telegraphed that in his opinion Franklin ought not to advance beyond Annandale. At 3.10 I replied that I wanted Franklin's corps to go far enough to find out something about the enemy; that perhaps he might get such information at Annandale as to prevent his going farther; that otherwise he would push on toward Fairfax. I added that "our people must move more actively and find out where the enemy is. I am tired of guesses." Late in the afternoon I heard that Franklin's corps had halted at Annandale, and that he himself had been seen in Alexandria in the afternoon. I immediately telegraphed to General McClellan at 7.50 p. m. that his (Franklin's) being in Alexandria and his troops, halting at Annandale, was contrary to my orders; that his corps must push forward as I directed, protect the railroad, and open our communication with Manassas. General McClellan replied at 8 p. m., referring to his previous telegrams, and said that he had not deemed it safe for Franklin to march beyond Annandale, and that he was responsible for his being in Alexandria and his corps halting at Annandale.

Early on the morning of the 30th, I made inquiries of the Quartermaster General in regard to transportation, and telegraphed at 9.40 to General McClellan that I was by no means satisfied with General Franklin's march of yesterday (29th). Considering the circumstances of the case he was very wrong in stopping at Annandale. I referred to the fact that he could have obtained transportation if he had applied for it to the Quartermaster's Department, and added: "He knew the importance of open-

ing communication with General Pope's army, and should have acted more promptly."

The foregoing is, I believe a correct summary of the orders and instructions given by me in regard to the movement of General Franklin's corps, my expressions of dissatisfaction, and the reasons alleged for the delays which in the result proved so unfortunate. . . . "

General Halleck, it will be remembered, contrary to his desire, was called from a field where his military achievements had brought him into favorable notice before the country, to one wherein he was comparatively a stranger; where the condition of affairs at that particular juncture were both delicate and dangerous, and elevated to the command of "all the land forces of the United States."

Under then existing conditions will it require but a moment's reflection to realize the necessity of zealous support and co-operation on the part of all his subordinates in command, who could as they might elect, crown his efforts with success or failure, according as they were predisposed to receive or issue orders.

It will be difficult, however, to realize under any other hypothesis than that of imbecility or hypnotic influence, how, under the authority with which he was clothed as commander-in-chief, he could for a moment tolerate with impunity, the flagrant disregard of orders and the neglect of necessary and imperative duties.

As has been shown, General Pope was at this moment very actively engaged with the enemy, whose objective was the capture of Washington, and as no direct communication had been had with him for four days, very great concern and anxiety was felt in regard to the fate of his army as well as the security of the city.

On August 29th General Barnard telegraphed to General McClellan from Washington: "It is reported to



headquarters that Lee is advancing on Washington tonight, probably by the Chain Bridge. . . . ”

On the same date, President Lincoln sent him this dispatch: “What news from direction of Manassas Junction? What generally?”

To the President’s inquiry, McClellan returned the following significant answer which, when taken in conjunction with what has preceded, may help to supply a motive for the exercise of the faculty of knowing just “how not to do it.” McClellan’s reply was as follows:

“The last news I received from the direction of Manassas was from stragglers to the effect that the enemy were evacuating Centreville and retiring toward Thoroughfare Gap. . . . I am clear that one of two courses should be adopted: First, to concentrate all our available forces to open communications with Pope; Second, to leave Pope to get out of his scrape, and at once use all our means to make the capital perfectly safe. No middle ground will now answer. Tell me what you wish me to do, and I will do all in my power to accomplish it. I wish to know what my orders and authority are. I ask for nothing, but will obey whatever orders you give. I only ask a prompt decision, that I may at once give the necessary orders. It will not do to delay longer.”

In view of the fact that constant strenuous efforts had been made since the 30th of July to accomplish precisely what McClellan now suggested as absolutely necessary to be done, and that to his action alone was General Pope chiefly indebted for the “scrape” he was now in, the heartlessness of his suggestions at this time are plainly susceptible, more of personal than of patriotic motives.

The President however, did not make the “prompt decision” by superseding the commander-in-chief which was evidently the purpose so much desired, but replied to him as follows: “Yours of to-day just received. I think

your first alternative to wit, 'to concentrate all our available forces to open communication with Pope,' is the right one, but I wish not to control. That I now leave to General Halleck, aided by your counsels.'"

## CHAPTER IX

McClellan ordered to send ammunition to Pope—His remarkable lack of knowledge and zeal—Pope plans a forward movement—His orders to Porter—Porter's dispatch to Burnside—His ridicule and contempt for Pope's order. Is ordered to push forward into action. Is peremptorily ordered to march to the battlefield and report in person. Pope makes a report to Halleck—The second battle of Bull Run. Pope receives word from McClellan that he can get supplies at Alexandria by sending a cavalry escort for them—Another furious battle—Men and horses two days without food—Three weeks of indescribable labor and hardships—Halleck's hearty commendation of Pope's actions—Promises him re-enforcements and asks if he cannot renew the attack—Pope confronted by whole rebel army—Requests Halleck to issue a complimentary order to his army. Halleck promises compliance—Pope's dispatch—His cavalry used up. Unsoldierly conduct of some of the Potomac army generals—Their example demoralizing and disastrous—Peremptory orders necessary for obedience to duty—Disobedience the result of personal feeling regarding changes of command—Reorganization necessary for success. Another battle—The army in bad condition—Re-enforcements withheld from him—Confronted by superior forces. His troops unable to attack—Ordered to withdraw within the fortifications of Washington. Within the fortifications—Consternation at Washington—Intense anxiety throughout the North—Employees of the departments organized for defense of Washington, and preparations made for removal of arsenal stores—Militia mobilized.

**O**N the 30th of August, General Halleck telegraphed General McClellan: "Ammunition and particularly for artillery, must be immediately sent forward to Centreville for General Pope. It must be done with all possible dispatch." And later, on the same date, he sent the following: "Franklin's and all of Sumner's corps should be pushed forward with all possible dispatch. They must use their legs and make forced marches. Time now is everything. Send some sharpshooters on the train to Bull Run. . . ."

To the above dispatches from General Halleck, McClel-

lan returned the following answer which suggests a wonderful lack of useful information, and of a not over zealous desire on his part to "do all in his power" to accomplish favorable results:

"I know nothing of the calibers of Pope's artillery. All I can do is to direct my ordnance officer to load up all the wagons sent to him. I have already sent all my headquarters wagons. You will have to see that wagons are sent from Washington. I can do nothing more than give the order that every available wagon in Alexandria shall be loaded at once . . . I have no sharpshooters except the guard around my camp. I have sent off every man but those, and will now send them with the train as you direct . . . You now have every man of the army of the Potomac who is within my reach."

As previously noted, General Pope was preparing for a forward movement of his forces early on the morning of August 28th, At 3 o'clock on the morning of the 29th from his headquarters "Near Bull Run," he issued through his chief of staff the following order to Major General Porter:

"McDowell has intercepted the retreat of Jackson. Sigel is immediately on the right of McDowell. Kearney and Hooker march to attack the enemy's rear at early dawn. Major General Pope directs you to move upon Centreville at the first dawn of day with your whole command, leaving your trains to follow. It is very important that you should be here at a very early hour in the morning. A severe engagement is likely to take place, and your presence is necessary."

In another, joint dispatch, of same date from Centreville, to Generals McDowell and Porter, he said:

"You will please move forward your joint commands toward Gainsville. I sent General Porter written orders to that effect an hour and a half ago."

Heintzelman, Sigel, and Reno are moving on the Warrenton turnpike, and must now be not far from Gainsville. I desire that as soon as communication is established between this force and your own the whole command shall halt. It may be necessary to fall back behind Bull Run at Centreville to-night. I presume it will be so, on account of our supplies.

I have sent no orders of any description to Ricketts and none to interfere in anyway with the movements of McDowell's troops, except what I sent by his aide-de-camp last night, which were to hold his position on the Warrenton pike until the troops from here should fall on the enemy's flank and rear. I do not even know Rickett's position, as I have not been able to find out where General McDowell was until a late hour this morning. . . . One thing must be had in view, that the troops must occupy a position from which they can reach Bull Run to-night or by morning. The indications are that the whole force of the enemy is moving in this direction at a pace that will bring them here by to-morrow night or the next day. . . "

On the evening of the 28th, the following dispatch from "4 miles from Manassas," was sent from General Porter to General Burnside: "All that talk of bagging Jackson, etc., was bosh. That enormous Gap (Manassas) was left open and the enemy jumped through, and the story of McDowell having cut off Longstreet had no good foundation. The enemy have destroyed all our bridges, burned trains, etc., and made this army rush back to look after its line of communication and find our base of subsistence.

There is a report that Jackson is at Centreville, which you can believe or not. The enemy destroyed an immense amount of property at Manassas. . . . I expect the next thing will be a raid on our rear by way of Warrenton by Longstreet who was cut off."

Again, on the morning of the 29th, General Porter sent

the following dispatch from Bristoe, "Shall be off in half an hour." The messenger who brought this (Pope's order) says the enemy had been at Centreville, and pickets were found there last night. Sigel had severe fight last night; took many prisoners. Banks is at Warrenton Junction; McDowell near Gainesville; Heintzelman and Reno at Centreville, where they marched yesterday, and Pope went to Centreville with the last two as a body guard, at the time not knowing where was the enemy and when Sigel was fighting within 8 miles of him and in sight. Comment is unnecessary. The enormous trains are still rolling on, many animals not having been watered for fifty hours. I shall be out of provisions to-morrow night. . . . I hope Mac is at work, and we will soon get ordered out of this. It would seem from proper statements of the enemy that he was wandering around loose; but I expect they know what they are doing, which is more than anyone here or anywhere knows."

The foregoing dispatch of General Porter supplies its own comment, and if read in connection with the last dispatch of General McClellan to the President, would seem to convey considerable information.

At 4.30 p. m. on August 29th, General Pope, from his "headquarters in the Field," sent the following dispatch to General Porter: Your line of march brings you in on the enemy's right flank. I desire you to push forward into action at once on the enemy's flank and, if possible on his rear, keeping your right in communication with General Reynolds. The enemy is massed in the woods in front of us, but can be shelled out as soon as you engage their flank. Keep heavy reserves and use your batteries, keeping well closed to your right all the time. In case you are obliged to fall back, do so to your right and rear, so as to keep you in close communication with the right wing."

Again, at 8.50 p. m., on the same day, General Pope is-

sued the following order to General Porter, dated from "Headquarters in the Field, Near Bull Run," which will be understood later on. "General: Immediately upon receipt of this order, the precise hour of receiving which you will acknowledge, you will march your command to the field of battle of to-day and report to me in person for orders. You are to understand that you are expected to comply strictly with this order, and to be present on the field within three hours after its reception or after day break to-morrow morning."

At 5 o'clock on the morning of August 30th, General Pope sent the following report to General Halleck:

"We fought a terrific battle here yesterday with the combined forces of the enemy, which lasted with continuous fury from daylight until dark, by which time the enemy was driven from the field, which we now occupy. Our troops are too much exhausted yet to push matters, but I shall do so in the course of the morning, as soon as Fitz John Porter's corps comes up from Manassas.

The enemy is still in our front, but badly used up. We have lost not less than 8,000 men killed and wounded, but from the appearance of the field the enemy lost at least two to one. It stood strictly on the defensive, and every assault was made by ourselves. Our troops behaved splendidly. The battle was fought on the identical battle field of Bull Run which greatly increased the enthusiasm of our men. . . . We have made great captures. . . . I received a note this morning from General Franklin, written by order of General McClellan, saying that wagons and cars would be loaded and sent to Fairfax Station as soon as I would send a cavalry escort to Alexandria to bring them out. Such a request, when Alexandria is full of troops and we are fighting the enemy, needs no comment. . . . "

The same day at 9.45 p. m. General Pope sent another dispatch from Centreville, as follows:

“We have had a terrific battle again to-day. The enemy largely re-enforced, assaulted our position early to-day. We held our ground firmly until 6 p. m., when the enemy, massing very heavy forces on our left, forced back that wing about half a mile. At dark we held that position. Under all the circumstances, both horses and men having been two days without food; and the enemy greatly outnumbering us, I thought it best to draw back to this place at dark. The movement has been made in perfect order and without loss. The troops are in good heart, and marched off the field without the least hurry or confusion. Their conduct was very fine.

The battle was most furious for hours without cessation, and the losses on both sides very heavy. The enemy is badly crippled, and we shall do well enough. Do not be uneasy. We will hold our own here. The labors and hardships of this army for two or three weeks have been beyond description. We have delayed the enemy as long as possible without losing the army. We have damaged him heavily, and I think the army entitled to the gratitude of the country. Be easy; everything will go well.”

“P. S. We have lost nothing; neither guns nor wagons.”

On the following morning General Halleck telegraphed him as follows:

“My dear General: You have done nobly. Don’t yield another inch if you can avoid it. All reserves are being sent forward. Couch’s division goes to-day. Part of it went to Sangster’s Station last night with Franklin and Sumner, who must now be with you. Can’t you renew the attack? I don’t write more particularly for fear dispatch will not reach you. I am doing all in my power for you and your noble army. God bless you and it. . . .”



In reply to this dispatch General Pope returned the following answer: "Your dispatch of 11 a. m. has been received, and I thank you for your considerate commendation. I would be glad to have it in such shape that the army might be acquainted with it. We shall fight to the last. The whole secession army engaged as yesterday

Ewell is killed, Jackson is badly wounded, and other generals of less note wounded. The plan of the enemy will undoubtedly be to turn my flank. If he does so he will have his hands full. My troops are in good heart. I need cavalry horses terribly. Send me 2,000 in lots—I have never yet received a single one."

General Halleck replied to this as follows: "I want to issue a complimentary order, but as you are daily fighting it could hardly be distributed. I will do so very soon. "

On the morning of September 1st, General Pope from Centreville sent to General Halleck the following dispatch which will not be without considerable interest:

"All was quiet yesterday and so far this morning, my men are resting; they need it much. Our cavalry is completely broken down, so that there are not five horses to a company that can raise a trot. The consequence is that I am forced to keep considerable infantry along the roads in my rear to make them secure, and even then it is difficult to keep the enemy's cavalry off the roads. I shall attack again to-morrow if I can; the next day certainly

I think it my duty to call your attention to the unsoldierly and dangerous conduct of many brigade and some division commanders of the forces sent here from the Peninsula. Every word and act and intention is discouraging, and calculated to break down the spirits of the men and produce disaster. One commander of a corps, who was ordered to march from Manassas Junction to join me

near Groveton, although he was only 5 miles distant, failed to get up at all, and, worse still, fell back to Manassas without a fight, and in plain hearing, at less than 3 miles distance, of a furious battle, which raged all day. It was only in consequence of peremptory orders that he joined me next day. One of his brigades, the brigadier-general of which professed to be looking for his division, absolutely remained all day at Centreville, in plain view of the battle, and made no attempt to join. What renders the whole matter worse, these are both officers of the Regular Army, who do not hold back from ignorance or fear. Their constant talk, indulged in publicly and in promiscuous company, is that the Army of the Potomac will not fight; that they are demoralized by withdrawal from the Peninsula, etc. When such example is set by officers of high rank, the influence is very bad amongst those in subordinate stations.

You have hardly an idea of the demoralization among officers of high rank in the Potomac Army, arising in all instances from personal feeling in relation to changes of commander-in-chief and others. These are mere tools, or parasites, but their example is producing, and must necessarily produce, very disastrous results. You should know these things, as you alone can stop it. Its source is beyond my reach, though its effects are perceptible and very dangerous. I am endeavoring to do all I can, and will most assuredly put them where they shall fight or run away.

My advice to you—I give it with freedom, as I know you will not misunderstand it—is that, in view of any satisfactory results, you draw back this army to the intrenchments in front of Washington, and set to work in that secure place to re-organize and rearrange it. You may avoid great disaster by doing so.

I do not consider the matter except in a purely military

light, and it is bad enough, and grave enough to make some action very necessary. When there is no heart in the leaders, and every disposition to hang back, much cannot be expected from the men. . . .”

On the morning of Sept. 2d, General Pope telegraphed General Halleck from Fairfax Court House, as follows: “We had another pretty severe fight last night, in which Reno’s and Heintzelman’s corps were engaged. The enemy massed his force to turn our position by breaking through at Fairfax, but so far without success. He was repulsed by Hooker and McDowell. As soon as the enemy brings up his forces again he will again turn me. I will give battle when I can, but you should come out and see the troops. They were badly demoralized when they joined me, both officers and men, and there is an intense idea among them that they must get behind the intrenchments. The whole force I had for duty yesterday morning was 57,000 men, exclusive of Couch’s.

The straggling is awful in the regiments from the Peninsula. Unless something can be done to restore tone to this army it will melt away before you know it. Part of Couch’s command was detained, and is still so, at Alexandria. The enemy is still in our front. It is his undoubted purpose to keep on, slowly turning our position so as to come in on our right. You had best at once decide what is to be done. The enemy is in very heavy force and must be stopped in some way. These forces under my command are not able to do so in the open field, and if again checked I fear the force will be useless afterwards.

If you knew the troops here and their condition I think it would be well. You had best look out well for your communications. The enemy from the beginning has been throwing his rear toward the north, and every movement shows that he means to make trouble in Maryland.

Wherever I have been attacked he is in greatly super-

ior force. I would attack to-day, but the troops are absolutely unable."

From the tone of the preceding dispatches of General Pope, in such marked contrast to those which General McClellan was accustomed to send, it must be conceded that he was at least no coward and that he thoroughly understood and was fully able to correctly grasp the situation. In the light of subsequent events, his predictions read almost like prophecies. He was thoroughly a soldier who understood his duty was, strictly to obey, and it would perhaps have been well for the nation, had his advice been followed.

On the same date of his last dispatch, he received the following order from General Halleck: "You will bring your forces as best you can within or near the line of fortification. General McClellan has charge of all the defenses, and you will consider any direction, as to disposition of troops as they arrive, given by him as coming from me. Do not let the enemy get between you and the works. It is impossible for me to leave Washington."

And on the evening of the same day General Pope reported to him from Ball's Cross Roads as follows: "I arrived here safely. Command coming in on the road without much molestation. . . . Within an hour all the commands on the other roads will be in camp within the intrenchments. . . . I await your orders. The enemy still continues to beat around on the north. . . . The troops are very weary, but otherwise in good condition."

The stirring events of the last few days of this period with the near approach of the rebel army, created a feeling of consternation in Washington and of intense anxiety throughout the North. General Dix, at Fort Monroe, was ordered to send forward to Washington as speedily as possible, all that could be spared of General Keyes' Corps, and General Burnside at Aquia Creek the troops

under his command, leaving there only a rear guard to protect, or destroy as circumstances might require, all remaining property.

The clerks and employes of the Departments, and the employes on the public buildings in Washington, were ordered by the President to be organized into companies and armed for the defense of the Capital; meantime preparations were made for the shipment of all arsenal stores to New York, and the militia in Pennsylvania and other States was being mobilized.

## CHAPTER X

General Pope inquires regarding his status—Blames McClellan for his lack of re-enforcements and for their inefficient equipment—Urges Halleck to assume command and suggests immediate offensive movements while the enemy is weakened—His true grasp of the situation—The wisdom of his suggestions and the probable consequence in not adopting them—McClellan displays his contempt for Pope—Pope appeals to Halleck and reminds him of the great injustice he is doing him—Halleck's hypocritical apology—The armies of the Potomac and Virginia consolidated under McClellan and Pope relieved—Outrageous treatment of Pope—Secret of McClellan's great power—Perilous position of the government—McClellan's character and ambition—A dangerous man—Order of the President removing Porter, Franklin and Griffin from their commands—Pope writes a personal letter to Halleck—Reminds him of his lack of justice and unfair dealings with him—Challenges investigation of his conduct—His failure of success the result of neglect of duty, if not worse, of others—His zeal and faithfulness recounted—McClellan's retention a fatal mistake for the country—Warns him against McClellan's machinations—His prophetic predictions and his demand for justice—Halleck's unsatisfactory reply—His position—His lack of determination and moral courage—Pope's scathing rejoinder—Reiterates his determination to appeal to Congress for justice if necessary—Reviews his late campaign and the gross injustice done him—The treachery of McClellan, Porter and their colleagues ignored to his discredit—Halleck's culpability in the matter—A dangerous precedent—The unmerited sacrifice of his honor and reputation as a soldier in behalf of criminals—Halleck's unenviable position.

**O**N September 3rd, General Pope addressed Col. Kelton, General Halleck's Assistant Adjutant General as follows: "I do not exactly understand my status here. Will you ask the general, so I may know. Does McClellan command in chief on this side of the river, or do his functions only extend to designating the positions to be occupied by the troops arriving from Centreville? Everybody in this army considers him responsible for the failure to send forward Sumner and Franklin and Cox or anybody else, and for the inefficient condition in which

they did arrive, without artillery and with only 40 rounds of ammunition. There is, and can be, no good feeling here under these circumstances.

Beg the general, if nothing else can be done, to command himself. It is easy to do so from Washington as the telegraph lines are all through these works. Anything like effectiveness here is impossible under present circumstances. . . . Show this note to the general, if you think best."

On the same date he sent the following dispatch to General Halleck! "We ought not to lose a moment in pushing forward the fresh troops to confront the enemy. In three days we should be able to renew the offensive in the direction of Little River pike, beyond Fairfax Court House. We must strike again with fresh men while the enemy is weakened and broken down. I am ready to advance again to the front with the fresh troops now here. Those I brought in can remain for two days. Somebody ought to have the supreme command here. Let us not sit down quietly, but push forward again. I give you these suggestions because I believe them very important. I would have attacked again yesterday, but for the reasons I gave you. Whether the causes then stated can be received I don't know, but if possible they should be."

There can be no doubt that General Pope of all others at this time had the correct idea of the true situation. Lee's army was many miles distant from its base in a devastated country, and at least a very large proportion of his troops, were probably in no better physical condition than were those of Pope at the close of hostilities at Fairfax.

His plan of procedure was precisely that which President Lincoln for similar reasons later on, vainly tried to persuade and shame McClellan to adopt; they were substantially similar to those which Lincoln had urged in the

beginning of the war, and had General Pope's advice been followed now, it is reasonably probable that the battles of Antietam and Gettysburg would never have been fought.

On the 5th of September, Pope telegraphed General Halleck: "I have just received an order from General McClellan to have my command in readiness to march with three days' rations and further details of the march.

What is my command and where is it? McClellan has scattered it about in all directions, and has not informed me of the position of a single regiment. Am I to take the field and under McClellan's orders?" Later on the same day he wrote to him as follows: "I must again ask your attention to the condition of things in this army. By the present arrangement you are doing me more injury than my worst enemy could do. It is understood, and acted on, that I am deprived of my command, and that it is assigned to McClellan.

An order defining his exact status here as well as my own is necessary at once. I send you an official protest against his action.

Again, I understood from you that you intended to publish a complimentary order to my army, for their arduous and difficult service, based upon the telegram you sent me. Your silence since conveys very plainly an unfavorable impression of me to the country. I hope that you will do me the kindness and the justice not to delay the issue of this order.

I have also to request that my official report sent you this morning be published. It is necessary for my own reputation, which I think will be injured by the arrangements here. I trust you will furnish a copy of the report for the press as soon after you receive it as possible.

I am sure you will see the propriety of all these requests. Either I have conducted badly or I have not. If I have, I am prepared to shoulder the blame, but if, as



both you and the President inform me—my course has met your entire approval, I am entitled to be shielded from unjust censure. I am sure you will cheerfully admit this. I feel equally confident that you will repair it."

To this letter General Halleck sent the following "unofficial" reply: "My dear General: You will excuse me for not answering yours, official, of this morning. In the first place I did not know what would be your command, the two armies having been virtually consolidated. In the next I had no time. Even now I can write only a few hasty words. The troops at present are under McClellan's orders, and it is evident that you cannot serve under him willingly. Moreover, your testimony is required by the Court of Inquiry ordered on Generals Porter, Franklin and Griffin.

Your report was read to-day to the Cabinet, and they were unanimously of the opinion that it ought not to be published. The President coincides in that opinion.

The President and Secretary both think that no order in relation to the recent battles should be issued at present. None was issued in regard to McClellan's battles before Richmond. Do not infer from this that any blame attaches to you. On the contrary we think you did your best with the material you had. I have not heard anyone censure you in the least.

The differences and ill feeling among the generals are very embarrassing to the administration, and unless checked will ruin the country. It must cease. It is discreditable to all parties. We must all act together or we shall accomplish nothing, but be utterly disgraced.

You know that I am your friend and will never see any injustice done to you if I can help it, but there are matters of such great importance to be decided now that individual preferences must yield. We must do what seems best to reconcile the differences which exist in the two armies.

I will explain to you more fully as soon as you come over to report.”

On the same day, Sept. 5th, General Halleck sent him the following dispatch: “The armies of the Potomac and Virginia being consolidated, you will report for orders to the Secretary of War.”

Thus was terminated the campaign of the Army of Virginia under Major General John Pope.

That he was very unjustly treated, there can be no possible doubt, and, after the lapse of over forty years, it will appear strange, and difficult to understand why this brave and loyal soldier could not then have been awarded the credit and commendation for which his services and merits justly entitled him.

If one can but realize however, the conditions as they really existed at that time, the reason is not so difficult to comprehend, and possibly, under all the circumstances the result could not safely have been different.

General McClellan was a man of unquestioned ability and as a military organizer, was at that time perhaps without an equal. He had built up the Army of the Potomac, and to a large extent his favorites were in command. No expense had been spared, either in its equipment or for its comfort, and so far as he could do so, it was shielded from all dangers. He was popular, and his praises were constantly being talked and sung and he was idolized by his army.

On the other hand, the government was seriously beset with dangers from the organized bands of “Copperheads” at home and diplomatic complications abroad. The Confederates were actively and energetically at work in foreign capitals, and England and France were eagerly waiting to seize an opportunity to give them recognition.

McClellan was haughty, vain, and ambitious. He knew his power, and the fact that later, he was willing to stulti-

fy himself by seeking an election to the presidency on a platform which declared the war,—which brought his efforts he had done his best to make—"a failure," is proof that he could not hesitate, in a quiet way to use it.

Under such circumstances it was perhaps impolitic for the government to give offense, by extolling the services of a meritorious but hated rival. It might have been very dangerous to have done so.

On the same day that Pope was relieved of his command the following order was published: "By direction of the President, Major Generals Fitz John Porter and Wm. B. Franklin and Brigadier General Charles Griffin are relieved from their respective commands until the charges against them can be investigated by a court of inquiry."

In the light of what has heretofore transpired, the following reports and correspondence which are self explanatory, will prove not only highly interesting, but as well, instructive.

The suppressed report of General Pope to which he refers in his letter to General Halleck, is in its main features embodied in his final official report, a large portion of which will fittingly conclude this record of his campaign.

On Sept. 30th, from Saint Paul, General Pope addressed the following letter to General Halleck:

"Dear Sir: The letter which I am about to address you had perhaps better have been left unwritten. Its result will soon exhibit whether or not this is so. You will excuse a little plain speaking, since it will doubtless be for our mutual benefit.

I begin, then, by saying that in my judgment every sense of justice and fair dealing, as well as a sense of deep personal obligation, should have impelled you to sustain me against the machinations of McClellan and his parasites, knowing well, as you did, that the result of the late

campaign in Virginia was directly due to the neglect of duty (to call it by no worse name) of these very men. If you desire to know the personal obligation to which I refer, I commend you to the President, the Secretary of War, or any other member of the administration. Any of these can satisfy your inquiries.

No man knows better than yourself the constancy, the energy, and the zeal with which I endeavored to carry out your programme in Virginia. Your own letters and dispatches from beginning to end are sufficient evidence of this fact, and also of the fact that I not only committed no mistake, but that every act and movement met with your heartiest concurrence. Of the details of these movements I challenge examination. Your own declarations to me up to the last hour I remained in Washington bore testimony that I had shown every quality to command success.

It may be, and doubtless was, true that considering the relations between myself and McClellan and many of his followers who held high commands in that army, it was better to change the commander of the armies around Washington, but this fact did not necessitate nor justify, in view of the facts in your possession, that McClellan should be thus advanced nor that I should be banished to a remote and unimportant command. A great and fatal mistake for the country as for yourself was committed when he was thus assigned.

If you had sustained me as I had every reason to expect, and did expect you would do, you would have had a warm and earnest friend, as I had always been. By yielding to and advancing McClellan you have only put into the hands of an enemy a club to beat your own brains out with. You can never be forgiven for occupying the place you do. You of course do not imagine McClellan to be your friend in any sense.

Every motive a man can have he has to displace you

from your position, which is a constant reproach and humiliation to him. Neither he nor his clique will omit any means to destroy you.

Having at your own urgent request and from a sense of duty laid before the Government the conduct of McClellan, Porter and Griffin, and substantiated the facts stated by their own written documents, I am not disposed to push the matter further, unless the silence of the Government in the midst of the unscrupulous slander and misrepresentation purposely put in circulation against me and the restoration of these officers without trial to their commands, coupled with my banishment to a distant and unimportant department, render it necessary as an act of justice to myself.

As I have already said, I challenge and seek examination of my campaign in Virginia in all its details, and unless the Government by some high mark of public confidence, such as they have given me in private, relieves me from the atrocious injury done to my character as a soldier by the means I have specified above, justice to myself and to all connected with me demands that I should urge the court of inquiry that was ordered, but suspended through the influence of the very men charged with the crimes to be investigated. This investigation, under the circumstances above stated, I shall assuredly urge in every way.

If it cannot be accomplished by military courts, it will undoubtedly be the subject of inquiry in Congress. It is hard that I should be subjected to such a necessity by a Government which has approved my conduct so highly in private, and which knew so well the truth of the facts I have stated, but it is especially hard, in view of my relations with you, that I should be compelled even to ask at your hands the justice which it is your duty to assure to every officer of the army.

You do not suppose that I fancy that you “did the best you could for me.” What you have done amounts to little else than degradation, (if you thought of it at all) that I was likely to be satisfied with such an arrangement. You could easily have united the Western Department again and have given me the command. I need not tell you that such an assignment would have been very acceptable to the West, and would at once have freed me from the odium and abuse which have so shamefully and unjustly been heaped upon me by the papers and people in the influence of the unscrupulous military clique which have made honor and duty a by-word and reproach.

Your own experience tells you that the operations in the West, by which, without fighting a battle, we have lost all we gained by such sacrifice of life and treasure, are directly due to the separation of the Western Department into half a dozen independent commands. This is the command you should have given me, after the harm you suffered to befall me by postponing the court of inquiry and by maintaining a silence which has been construed into unbelief of the charges I had preferred. You still have it in your power to do so. I tell you frankly that by the time Congress meets such influences as cannot be resisted will be brought to bear on this subject. I have still a strong friendship for you, from which I have not been able to free myself. I prefer greatly that you should do me this justice of your own accord. I need not remind you that when you arrived in Washington I earnestly urged you, as I had before urged the President, to allow me to return to the West. I told you, as I had already told him, that McClellan could not be depended on to co-operate with me, and that I was sure he would fail me. You insisted upon my remaining, against my repeated requests and my firm conviction that the army under my command would be sacrificed by the very men for whose release from James

River it was about to encounter such risk and undergo such hardship.

Although the result proved to be what I had predicted to you, and although you knew I had fought desperately and to the last to prevent the consequences I had foreseen, I found myself banished to the frontier, and the very men against whom I warned you, and who brought about these disasters, are rewarded by according to them the very objects they sought to attain by deliberate and shameful betrayal of trust.

Of another thing I desire to warn you here, and you had best give heed to it. The pretorian faction in the Army of the Potomac is now seeking to remove every officer of distinction from that army who is not in their interests. Hooker, by his rising reputation and known hostility to them and their purposes, is becoming dangerous. He will be gotten rid of in some way. As it cannot now be done by detraction and slander, they will seek by affected commendation and applause to remove him to some other command. Do not allow such transparent intrigue to induce you to consent that Hooker should be separated from that army. You will find him a true man and one of incalculable use to you with that army. If you allow him to be separated from it you will again be playing into the hands that seek your destruction.

McClellan will inevitably be set aside. I know of nothing conceivable that can prevent it before many months go by. Hooker is the only man I know available to succeed him, and under all aspects should be kept there.

You are a man of the world, and you know well that McClellan will never forgive you for superseding him in the command of the army. You stand in the way of a thousand purposes which he and those around him have in view. Your presence as general-in-chief is a constant reproach and mortification to him. Already the journals

and people in his interest are representing that he is really commander, whilst you are but a tool in his hands. Such an opinion is entertained even by members of the cabinet, and everything that has occurred since the 1st of September gives color to such belief.

For your own sake as well as for that of the country do not permit yourself to be placed in such a position. Do not let the military clique of the Army of the Potomac remove from that army the prominent officers who are hostile to them. If you do you will soon see how much control you have over that army.

I write you this letter with mixed feelings. Personal, friendship and interest in your welfare, I think, predominate. I am not so blinded as not to know that it gave you pain to allow such scandal against me and to take such action as you thought the peculiar circumstances required. Much as I differ with you on that subject, I am not yet ready to blame you or to feel bitterly. Those circumstances no longer exist, and you can now at least do me justice and relieve me from the bitter mortification I have felt without re-opening old sores. I am very sure you will do it, but whether you do or not I impress upon you the necessity for your own sake of considering carefully the suggestions I have presented."

Of the truth of the charges and statements presented by General Pope in his pathetic appeal for simple justice, the preceding records will fully attest, and in the light of succeeding events, most of his predictions read like prophecies.

General Halleck on the 10th of October, following replied to his letter as follows:

"General: Your letter of the 30th ult. is just received. I very much regret the spirit manifested in it and the threatening tone assumed in it toward me. In this letter



you have assumed facts and drawn your conclusions from such assumptions.

Your premises are not true, and your conclusions are unjust. On no occasion have I acted unfriendly to you. On the contrary, I have done everything for you that I could have done for a brother; but you have wished me to do for you impossibilities.

You have asked me to do for you what my superiors and yours would not authorize me to do. Moreover you charge me with acts injurious to you which were neither my acts nor acts of my advising. For example, you charge me with exiling you to your present department. I did not send you there nor did I advise it. On the contrary, I advised against it. You complain that I acted unfriendly to you in giving the command to General McClellan. The facts do not sustain your assertion.

As General McClellan's army arrived here by detachments, every man I could move was, against his protest, sent to your command. He claimed that when the two armies began to unite, he, as ranking officer, had a right to command both. His claim was not admitted, and he remained in command only of the defenses of Washington. But when your forces fell back within the line of these defenses he clearly became entitled to the command. You complain more particularly of his commanding the army sent to Maryland. That army was composed mostly of his old troops. The feeling of many of his officers toward you was such that you could not then have commanded them. No one can deny this. I do not charge any fault upon you. I merely state the fact as it existed. The assignment of General McClellan to this command, or rather his retention in it, was not my act, nor that of the War Department, it was the act of the President alone, I did not even know of his decision on the matter till he himself announced it to General McClellan.

Again, you complain that Porter and Griffin have not been tried on your charges against them. You know that a court was ordered for their trial and that it was suspended because all officers were required in the field. A new court has been ordered, and they are to be tried, and the grounds of your charges fully investigated.

Again, you have complained that I would not permit you to publish your report. The President and entire cabinet decided against its publication; nevertheless you permitted it to go to the newspapers and thereby gave serious offense. If this act has injured you, do not blame me for it.

Again, you say I could have reunited the Western Department and could have given it to you, and that by not doing so I have acted unfriendly to you and have "degraded" you. Here, as throughout your whole letter, you assume as a fact what is totally untrue. Had the Western Department been reunited I could not have given the command to you, nor indeed to any other army officer. I will not attempt to reply in detail to your various charges of unfriendliness, for I cannot explain certain things without communicating to you information which I have no right to give. I will only say that your suppositions in regard to my feelings and conduct toward you are entirely unfounded.

I am well aware of the hostility of some of the parties whom you mention as being my enemies as well as yours; but you very much mistake my character if you suppose that I will permit my personal likes and dislikes to influence me in the performance of my public duty. So far as the public service is concerned I shall never vary a hair's breadth in my conduct on account of the personal hostility of others.

If they want my place they will be perfectly welcome to it whenever the Government desires to make the change.

I never wished the appointment and have no desire to retain it.

Permit me to say in conclusion that although I feel the injustice of your letter, it will not affect in the slightest degree my regard for you, nor my estimate of your services, past or future. I believe you wrote it under a misapprehension of the facts connected with the matters of which you complain."

General Halleck was the military adviser of the government, and his views and opinions would doubtless have prevailed on all matters relating to military movements, while his orders as General-in-Chief, would have been supreme had he but possessed the moral courage to give, and the determination to enforce them. That he did not do so is proof of the truth of Pope's claims and evidence of the great power possessed by General McClellan.

Halleck could have solved the difficulty, by himself assuming supreme command, which course had probably been the original intention of the Government. He admits that McClellan's troops were sent to Pope against the former's protests, which admission is another proof of the truth of Pope's charges. The latter does not complain of not being given command of the army, but that McClellan, who was responsible for his defeat, should be retained as its commander.

On October 20th, 1862, to the foregoing letter of General Halleck, General Pope returned the following reply:

"I have just received your letter of the 10th. I had not proposed to write you again on this subject, but it is necessary to do so briefly to correct some serious misapprehensions under which you seem to lie. I never charged you with unfriendly feeling nor acts toward me. You have misunderstood my letter. If I had thought you unfriendly I should never have written at all except officially.

I cannot see that there is any "threatening tone" about

my letter of September 30. Certainly it was not intended. You cannot construe my expressed determination to relieve myself of unjust and atrocious misrepresentation and injury by any means in my power a "threat;" If it indeed be one, it certainly cannot be addressed to you. It can only apply to those who have done me the wrong, or who, by failing to do me common justice, have suffered, if not encouraged, a great wrong to be done to my character and reputation.

Certainly the determination to right myself, if possible, is no "threat." Let us understand. I have strictly obeyed your orders in Virginia and endeavored in all fidelity to accomplish your wishes. I have toiled and fought earnestly and with all my heart; others shamefully failed even to do their simplest duty.

Through their failure all your expectations were not realized. The public, through wilful and determined slander and misrepresentation, have thrown the blame on me. You know that this is atrociously unjust. Do you not think that ordinary justice requires that you, as general-in-chief, under whose orders I acted and who have borne private testimony to my conduct, should bear that testimony publicly? No one will deny that my character and reputation as a soldier have been deeply, I may say irretrievably, injured by these infamous slanders. No man unacquainted with the whole facts can fail to believe what is said in view of the action of the Government.

What is that action? Officers charged with the gravest crimes are not only not tried but absolutely advanced to higher commands. The Government refuses to allow me to publish the facts. I am sent off to the far West. The general-in-chief declines to acknowledge my services in any public manner.

Who can fail to believe that I stand condemned by the Government I have served so faithfully. Would you not

believe so if you knew no more than the public? Why do you refuse to do me this simple act of justice? There must be a reason for it. Who is to be shielded by unjustly ruining, or allowing to be ruined, my reputation and my honor as a soldier?

It is very sure that these questions must be answered some time. Why are McClellan, Porter and Griffin retained in high commands with such charges of treachery and baseness hanging over them? Do you not believe these charges true? Are they not substantiated to your satisfaction by the papers attached to the report containing them? Did not both you and the President know before the battles at Manassas, from Porter's intercepted dispatches, that he was likely to do precisely what he did? The President himself told me so.

I would not care to press these charges if the Government would only do me the barest justice. Acknowledge publicly, as has been done privately, by the whole administration, that I did my duty bravely and skillfully in Virginia, and I have nothing further to say about what you do with the criminals who betrayed the country. If public interests require that these men be shielded from punishment, be it so.

I am informed that you object to publishing such an order; that the Cabinet and President are willing.

You say truly that there are things you cannot explain, but surely you do not expect me to remain quiet under such circumstances, or to fail to use all means in my power, military, political and social, to set myself right. It is now too late to set matters right by a court, which has been long enough delayed to allow the full impression to be made against me.

You assume that I confine my charges to Porter and Griffin. My report tells another story. The greatest criminal is McClellan, and my charge is direct and plain

against him. Your reason for retaining him in command, "the feelings of many officers of the Potomac Army," is the very strongest reason, in my view, why he should not be retained.

If officers' feelings are to regulate the selection of commanders for the Potomac Army, it is very clear that that army is governed by very different rules and regulations from the army of the West.

If the Potomac Army is entitled to this privilege of selection, surely the Western army is equally so, and you may rest assured that they will not be long in demanding it. The result of this state of things need not be elaborated.

You say that I "complain" that McClellan was placed in command of the army in Maryland. I think the expression misplaced. I said that facts in your possession did not "justify" it. He is under grave charges of neglect and abandonment of the Army of Virginia. He should never have been placed in command of anything under such circumstances. You know that he failed to do his duty, and I am glad that you deny having had anything to do with his assignment to that command.

You mistake also when you say that I asked you to put me in command of the reunited Western Department. I said, and say now, that one of three things I was entitled to; any one of them would have satisfied me. The dictates of the commonest justice gave me the right to expect one of them at least:

1st. That the court of inquiry be at once held and the blame be fixed where it belonged. It is now too late for that, as the delay has already made the worst impression against me that is possible.

2d. That the Government should acknowledge publicly, as it had done privately, my services in Virginia; or

3rd. That in case neither of these things could be done,

then that the Government bestow upon me some mark of public confidence as its opinion of my ability warranted.

None of these things have been done, and the part thus played by the Government against me has done me more injury than all else. It has stamped with truth statements which would otherwise never have been credited. I have been most unjustly and unfairly treated.

I cannot think of it without indignation. I wrote to you because I believed you have not considered my position. I have not myself doubted your friendliness. You know me well enough, I think, to understand that I will never submit if I can help it. The court of inquiry which you inform me has been ordered will amount to nothing for several reasons. It is too late, so far as I am concerned. Its proceedings, I presume, will be secret, as in the Harper's Ferry business.

The principal witnesses are here with me and I myself should be present. The Mississippi River closes by the 25th November; frequently sooner than that. It is then next to impossible to get away from this place. A journey through the snow of 200 miles is required to communicate with any railroad. All these things make it plain to me that the court of which you speak will amount to nothing.

Under any circumstances it is too late so far as I am concerned. The letters which I have addressed you are personal, and not official. They are written in direct view of my personal relations with you. They therefore deal almost wholly with personal matters or with the personal bearings of official questions. I could assign, as I shall in good time, the very strongest official reasons for every personal suggestion I have made.

I wrote to you because I desire you to understand fully my feelings and the course of action I shall pursue. I had hoped that you would render official steps unnecessary.

Your identification with the campaign in Virginia justified me in believing that unless some bad management or serious error marked my operations I would be sustained promptly and fully by you. I never would have consented to go into Virginia under any other belief. I felt sure, as I told you, that I would receive no support from McClellan, and it is not necessary to say here that if I had imagined for a moment that he would be rewarded, with his partisans, for abandoning me and betraying his trust, and that you would at least have consented to his and their advancement after such an act and would have failed to sustain me or even to do me the barest justice or to make the slightest acknowledgment in public of my services, I would never have put foot in Virginia.

Your not doing so, when the whole facts come to be known, cannot fail to be the subject of remark, especially so as the circumstances under which you came to Washington and I undertook the campaign in Virginia are well known to one-half of Congress.

You say that you do not allow personal feeling to regulate or even to influence your official action, yet you assign the personal feeling of officers of the Potomac Army as a reason for your action or your consent to the President's action in my case.

I will not pursue the matter. It seems plain to me that the Government has been very willing to allow me to be sacrificed for some reasons yet to be explained. I shall, if possible, find out what that reason is, so that I may at least be acquainted with the great public interests which justified the unmerited sacrifice of the honor and reputation of an officer whose services are so highly lauded in private by the Government which permits his public condemnation.

I neither ask nor expect an answer to this letter. I have accomplished my object and have fully observed the ob-



ligations of the personal friendship which has existed between us, most sincerely felt on my part, in laying before you in this manner and in advance of any official action, wherein I think myself wronged, and what in my view I had a right to expect at your hands.

If you have not the power (as I am led to infer from your letter) to do justice, even in words, to officers who served under your immediate orders and whose operations commanded your entire approval, but are forced to see them sacrificed without being permitted to put forth a word to prevent it, I have only to say that your position is certainly not to be envied. No man in all this country regrets more than I do that you occupy such a position or would more gladly see you out of it.

Excuse the length of this letter. Thus much seemed due to our private relations. I have not designed in any way to wound your feelings, and if I have said what is disagreeable to you, it has arisen from the necessity of my position."

## CHAPTER XI

General Pope's official report—Detailed history of his campaign—His operations misunderstood to an extent unparalleled in the history of warfare—Submits the facts of the record of his campaign and his reputation as a soldier to the unbiased verdict of his countrymen—Corroborative proofs of the truth of his statements—A safe confidence—Retributive justice—Porter cashiered.

**G**ENERAL Pope's official report of the "operations of his army during the late campaign," is dated at New York January 27th, 1863.

It is a very voluminous document, reciting in minute detail, and at length, the movements and occurrences, many of which have been heretofore noted. After relating the circumstances of his assignment to his command on the 26th of June, and of the duties enjoined upon him, he says: ". . . It was the wish of the Government that I should cover the city of Washington from any attack from the direction of Richmond. . . . At the same time so operate upon the enemy's lines of communication . . . as to draw off, if possible, a considerable force of the enemy from Richmond, and thus relieve the operations against that city of the Army of the Potomac. . . .

Whilst these movements were in progress commenced the series of battles which preceded and attended the retreat of General McClellan from the Chickahominy toward Harrison's Landing.

When first General McClellan began to intimate . . . that he designed making the movement toward James River, I suggested to the President . . . the impolicy of such a movement and the serious consequences which

would be likely to result from it, and urged upon him that he should send orders to General McClellan that if he were unable to maintain his position on the Chickahominy . . . to mass his whole force on the north side of that stream, even at the risk of losing much material of war, and endeavor to make his way in the direction of Hanover Court House; but in no event retreat with his army farther to the south than the White House or York River. I stated to the President that the retreat to James River was carrying him away from any re-enforcements that could possibly be sent to him within a reasonable time, and was absolutely depriving him of any substantial aid from the forces under my command; that by this movement the whole army of the enemy would be interposed between his army and mine, and that they would then be at liberty to strike in either direction, . . . and that it would therefore be impossible to send any of the forces under my command to re-enforce General McClellan without rendering it certain that the enemy, even in the worst case for themselves, would have the privilege and power of exchanging Richmond for Washington; that to them the loss of Richmond would be trifling, whilst the loss of Washington to us would be conclusive, or nearly so, in its results upon this war.

After General McClellan had taken up his position at Harrison's Landing I addressed him a letter, stating . . . my position and the distribution of the troops under my command, and requesting him in all earnestness and good faith to write me fully and freely his views, and to suggest to me any measures which he thought desirable to enable me to co-operate with him or to render any assistance in my power in the operations of the army under his command. I stated to him that I had no object except to assist his operations, and that I would undertake any labor and run any risk for that purpose, . . . and that, so

far as it was in my power to do so, I would carry out his wishes with all energy, and with all the means at my command.

In reply to this communication I received a letter from General McClellan, very general in its terms, and proposing nothing toward the accomplishment of the purpose I had suggested to him.

It became apparent that, considering the situation in which the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Virginia were placed in relation to each other, and the absolute necessity of harmonious and prompt co-operation between them, some military superior both of General McClellan and myself should be called to Washington and placed in command of all the operations in Virginia.

In accordance with these views Major General Halleck was called to Washington and placed in general command. Many circumstances, which it is not necessary here to set forth, induced me to express to the President, to the Secretary of War, and to General Halleck, my desire to be relieved from the command of the Army of Virginia and to be returned to the Western country.

My services, however, were considered necessary in the projected campaign, and my wishes were not complied with. I accordingly took the field in Virginia with grave forebodings of the result, but with a determination to carry out the plans of the Government with all the energy and with all the ability of which I was master.

Previous to taking the field I issued the following orders, which set out very fully the policy which I considered advisable, and which at that time received the sanction of the Government, and, so far as I know, the approval of the country.

The order requiring the troops to subsist upon the country in which their operations were conducted has, with a wilful disregard of its terms, been construed, great-

ly to my discredit, as authorizing indiscriminate robbery and plunder; yet the terms of this order are so specific as to the manner and by whom all property or subsistence needed for the use of the army should be seized, and the order is so common in the history of warfare, that I have been amazed that it could have been so misinterpreted and misunderstood.

It is therefore submitted here for the calm examination of the Government and of the public. I believed then and believe now that the policy there laid down was wise and just, and was well calculated to secure efficient and rapid operations of the army, and, in case of reverse, to leave the enemy without the means of subsisting in the country over which our army had passed, and over which any pursuit must be conducted. The long delay and embarrassment of the army under General Lee, in its subsequent movements toward Washington, occasioned largely by the want of supplies taken from the country under this order, fully justified its wisdom.

It was determined, before I left Washington to take the field in Virginia, that the union of the armies of Virginia and of the Potomac was absolutely essential both to the safety of the national capital and to the further successful prosecution of the operations against Richmond. The mission of the army under my command, therefore, was to cover as far as possible the front of Washington . . . and so operate upon the enemy's lines of communication . . . as to force him to make such heavy detachments from his main force at Richmond as would enable the Army of the Potomac to withdraw from its position at Harrison's Landing . . . . If, as was feared, the enemy should throw his whole force in the direction of Washington, it became my duty to resist his advance at all hazards, and so to delay and embarrass his movements as to

gain all the time possible for the arrival of the Army of the Potomac behind the Rappahannack, . . .

Early on the morning of the 20th (August) the enemy drove in our pickets in front of Kelly's Ford and at Rappahannock Station, but finding it would be impracticable to force the passage of the river without heavy loss, his advance halted, and the main body of his army was brought forward from the Rapidan. . . . Finding that it was not practicable to force the passage of the river in my front, the enemy began slowly to move up the river for the purpose of turning our right. My orders required me to keep myself closely in communication with Fredericksburg, to which point the Army of the Potomac was being brought from the Peninsula, with the purpose of re-enforcing me from that place by the line of the Rappahannock.

My force was too small to enable me to extend my right farther without so weakening my line as to render it easy for the enemy to break through at any point. I telegraphed again and again to Washington, representing this movement of the enemy toward my right and the impossibility of my being able to extend my lines so as to resist it without abandoning my connections with Fredericksburg.

I was assured on the 21st that if I would hold the line of the river two days longer I should be so strongly re-enforced as not only to be secure, but to be able to resume offensive operations; but on the 25th of August, the only forces that had joined me or were in the neighborhood were 2,500 men of the Pennsylvania Reserves, under General Reynolds, who had arrived at Kelly's Ford, and the division of General Kearny 4,500 strong, which had reached Warrenton Junction. . . . The movement of the enemy toward my right occasioned me much uneasiness, in consequence of the instructions which bound me to keep in close communication with Fredericksburg, . . .

Finding that the continued movement of the enemy to my right whilst heavy masses of his force still confronted me at Rappahannock Station, would within a day, if allowed to continue, either render my position on the Rappahannock wholly untenable or force me to give battle .

. . . in my front and on my right. I determined on the afternoon of the 22d to mass my whole force to recross the Rappahannock . . . near Rappahannock Station and by Kelly's Ford . . . and to fall upon the flank and rear of the long column of the enemy which was passing up the river toward our right. I accordingly made the necessary orders on the night of the 22d of August. The attempt would have been dangerous but no recourse was left me except to make this attack, to retire to Warrenton Junction and abandon the line of the Rappahannock, or to retire in the direction of Fredericksburg . and abandon the direct approaches to Washington City. I determined, therefore, to hazard the result and to fall furiously with my whole army upon the flank and rear of the enemy.

During the night of the 22d a heavy rain set in, which before day dawned on the 23d, had caused the river to rise 6 or 8 feet, carried away all our bridges, and destroyed all the fords. . . To recross the Rappahannock and to make the attack as proposed was no longer practicable, but the rise in the river which had prevented the movement I believed also would prevent the retreat of that portion of the enemy which had crossed at Sulphur Springs and Waterloo Bridge. . . . Early on the morning of the 23d. I massed my whole force in the neighborhood of Rappahannock Station, with the purpose of falling upon that portion of the enemy which had crossed above me. As the river was too high to be crossed and was likely to remain so for at least thirty-six hours, I

had no fear that the enemy would be able to interpose between me and Fredericksburg. . . .

On the night of the 22d of August, a small cavalry force of the enemy, crossing at Waterloo Bridge and passing through Warrenton, had made a raid upon our trains at Catlett's Station, and had destroyed four or five wagons in all, belonging to the train of my own headquarters. At the time this cavalry force attacked at Catlett's—and it certainly was not more than 300 strong—our whole army trains were parked at that place, and were guarded by not less than 1,500 infantry and five companies of cavalry. The success of this small cavalry party of the enemy, although very trifling and attended with but little damage was most disgraceful to the force which had been left in charge of the trains. . . .

On the 23d I received a dispatch . . . informing me that heavy re-enforcements would begin to arrive at Warrenton Junction the succeeding day. . . .

By the night of the 25th it became apparent to me that I could no longer keep open my communications with Fredericksburg and oppose the crossing of the Rappahannock . . . I determined no longer to attempt to mask the lower fords of the Rappahannock, but to assemble such forces as I had along the Warrenton turnpike between Warrenton and Gainesville, and give battle to the enemy on my right or left, as he might choose. . . .

I sent orders to General Porter, who had reported to me by note . . . to push forward and join Reno . . .

I sent orders to Colonel Haupt to direct one of the strongest divisions being sent forward to take post in the works at Manassas Junction, and requested General Halleck to push Franklin with all speed to Gainesville. . . .

After these precautions and assurances I thought and confidently expected that by the afternoon of the 26th, Franklin would have been at or near Gainesville, one di-



vision would have been occupying the works at Manassas Junction, and that the forces under Sturgis and Cox would have been at Warrenton Junction, whence they could have at once been pushed north in the direction of Warrenton turnpike.

About 8 o'clock at night on the 26th the advance of could have at once been pushed north in the direction of Jackson's force, having passed through Thoroughfare Gap, cut the railroad in the neighborhood of Kettle Run.

The moment our communications were interrupted at Kettle Run I was satisfied that the troops which had been promised me from the direction of Washington had made no considerable progress. Had Franklin been even at Centreville on the 26th, or had Cox and Sturgis been as far west as Bull Run on that day, the movement of Jackson through Thoroughfare Gap upon the railroad at Manassas would have been utterly impracticable. So confidently did I expect, from the assurances which I had time and again received, that these troops would be in position or at all events far advanced toward me, that Jackson's movement toward White Plains and in the direction of Thoroughfare Gap had caused but little uneasiness; but on the night of the 26th, it was very apparent to me that all these expected re-enforcements had utterly failed me, and that upon the small force under my own immediate command I must depend alone for any present operations against the enemy.

It was easy for me to retire in the direction of the lower fords of the Rappahannock to Fredericksburg, so as to bring me in immediate contact with the forces there or arriving there; but by so doing I should have left open the whole front of Washington; and after my own disappointment of the re-enforcements which I had expected I was not sure that there was any sufficient force, in the absence of the army under my command, to cover the capital.

I determined therefore at once to abandon the line of the Rappahannock and throw my whole force in the direction of Gainesville and Manassas Junction, to crush the enemy, who had passed through Thoroughfare Gap, and to interpose between the army of General Lee and Bull Run. . . .

From the 18th of August until the morning of the 27th, the troops under my command had been continuously marching and fighting night and day, and during the whole of that time there was scarcely an interval of an hour without the roar of artillery. The men had had little sleep, were greatly worn down with fatigue, had had little time to get proper food or to eat it, had been engaged in constant battles and skirmishes, and had performed services laborious, dangerous, and excessive beyond any previous experience in this country. As was to be expected under such circumstances, the numbers of the army under my command had been greatly reduced by deaths, by wounds, by sickness and fatigue, so that on the morning of the 27th of August I estimated my whole effective force (and I think the estimate was large) . . . making in all 54,500 men.

Our cavalry numbered on paper about 4,000 men, but their horses were completely broken down and there were not 500 men, all told, capable of doing much service, as should be expected from cavalry. The corps of Heintzelman had reached Warrenton Junction, but it was without wagons, without artillery, with only 40 rounds of ammunition to the man, and without even horses for the general and field officers. The corps of Porter had also reached Warrenton Junction with a very small supply of provisions and but 40 rounds of ammunition for each man.

. . . On the afternoon of the 27th, a severe engagement occurred between Hooker's division and Ewell's division, of Jackson's forces. The action commenced about

4 miles west of Bristoe Station. Ewell was driven back along the railroad, but still confronted Hooker at dark. . .

At dark on the 27th General Hooker reported to me that his ammunition was nearly exhausted, and that he had but about 5 rounds to the man left. I had by that time become conscious that the whole force under Jackson was south of the Warrenton turnpike and in the immediate neighborhood of Manassas Junction. . . . Thinking it altogether likely that Jackson would mass his whole force and attempt to turn our right at Bristoe Station, and knowing that Hooker, for want of ammunition, was in little condition to make long resistance, I sent back orders to General Porter, about dark of the 27th, to move forward at 1 o'clock in the night and report to me at Bristoe by daylight in the morning. . . . General Porter failed utterly to obey the orders that were sent him, giving as an excuse that his men were tired, that they would straggle in the night, and that the wagon trains proceeding eastward, in the rear of Hooker's division, would offer obstructions to his march. He, however, made no attempt whatever to comply with this order, although it was stated to him in the order itself that his presence was necessary on all accounts at daylight, and that the officer delivering the dispatch was instructed to conduct him to the field.

There were but two courses left open to Jackson in consequence of this sudden and unexpected movement of the army: He could not retrace his steps through Gainesville, as it was occupied by McDowell . . . and was either obliged, therefore, to retreat through Centreville, which would carry him still further from the main body of Lee's army, or to mass his force, assault us at Bristoe Station, and turn our right. He pursued the former course, and retired through Centreville. This mistake of Jackson's alone saved us from the consequences which would have

followed the flagrant and inexcusable disobedience of orders on the part of General Porter.

At 9 o'clock on the night of the 27th, satisfied of Jackson's position, I sent orders to General McDowell to push forward at the very earliest dawn of day toward Manassas Junction from Gainesville. . . General Porter's Corps did not arrive at Bristoe until 10.30 o'clock in the morning, and the moment that he found that Jackson had evacuated Manassas Junction he requested permission to halt at Bristoe and rest his men. Sykes division, of Porter's Corps, had spent the whole day of the 27th from 10 o'clock in the morning until daylight of the 28th in camp at Warrenton Junction. Morell's division, of the same corps, had arrived at Warrenton Junction during the day of the 27th, and also remained there during the whole of that night. Porter's Corps was by far the freshest in the whole army, and should have been, and I believe was, in better condition for service than any troops we had.

General McDowell reported to me afterward that he had given orders for the movement of his command upon Manassas Junction at 2 o'clock at night, in accordance with the directions I had sent him, but General Sigel, who commanded his advance and was at Gainesville . . . was absolutely in that town as late as 7.30 in the morning. Meantime, beginning about 3 o'clock in the morning of the 28th, Jackson commenced evacuating Manassas Junction, and his troops were marching from that point in the direction of Centreville until 10 or 11 o'clock in the day.

If the whole force under McDowell had moved forward as directed and at the time specified they would have intercepted Jackson's retreat toward Centreville by 8 o'clock in the morning. . . I reached Manassas Junction with Kearney's division and Reno's Corps about 12 o'clock in the day of the 28th, less than an hour after

Jackson in person had retired. I immediately pushed forward Hooker, Kearny and Reno upon Centreville, and sent orders to Fitz John Porter to come forward to Manassas Junction.

I felt sure then, and so stated, that there was no escape for Jackson. I accordingly sent orders to General McDowell, as also to General King, several times during the night of the 28th and once by his own staff officer, to hold his ground at all hazards to prevent the retreat of Jackson to the west, and that at daylight in the morning our whole force from Centreville and Manassas Junction would be up with the enemy, who must be crushed between us. . . .

I sent orders to General Porter, whom I supposed to be at Manassas Junction, where he should have been in compliance with my orders of the day before, to move upon Centreville at the earliest dawn, and stated to him the position of the forces, and that a severe battle would undoubtedly be fought during the morning of the 29th. The only apprehension at that time was that Jackson might attempt to retreat to the north in the direction of Leesburg.

. . . My forces were so disposed that McDowell, Sigel, and Reynolds, whose joint forces amounted to about 25,000 men, were immediately west of Jackson and between him and Thoroughfare Gap, whilst Kearny, Hooker, Reno, and Porter, about 25,000 strong, were to fall on him from the east at daylight in the morning. . . .

With this disposition of forces we were so far in advance of Longstreet that, by using our whole force vigorously, we should be able to crush Jackson before Longstreet could by any possibility reach the scene of action.

To my great disappointment, however, I learned toward daylight on the morning of the 29th, that King's division had fallen back in the direction of Manassas Junction, thus leaving open the road to Thoroughfare

Gap and making new movements and disposition of troops immediately necessary. . . .

Shortly after I received information of the withdrawal of King's division, I sent orders to General Sigel . . . to attack the enemy vigorously as soon as it was light enough to see, and bring him to a stand if it were possible to do so. I instructed General Heintzelman to push forward from Centreville . . . and directed General Reno to follow closely in his rear; to use all speed . . . and attack with the utmost promptness and vigor. I also sent orders to General Porter at Manassas Junction to move forward with the utmost rapidity with his own corps and King's division. I urged to make all speed, that he might come up with the enemy, and be able to turn his flank. . . .

Sigel attacked the enemy about daylight on the morning of the 29th, a mile or two east of Groveton, where he was soon joined by the divisions of Hooker and Kearny. Jackson fell back several miles, but was so closely pressed . . . that he was compelled to make a stand and make the best defense possible. . . .

I arrived on the field from Centreville about noon, and found the two armies confronting each other, both considerably cut up. . . . From 12 o'clock until 4 very severe skirmishes occurred constantly at various points . . . and were brought on at every indication that the enemy made of a disposition to retreat.

About 2 o'clock in the afternoon . . . I fully believed that Generals Porter and McDowell had reached their positions and had become engaged with the enemy . . . but I received information shortly afterward that General McDowell . . . would probably be up with us in two hours. At 4.30 I sent a peremptory order to General Porter to push forward at once into action on the enemy's right, and, if possible, to turn his rear. . . .

About 5.30 o'clock, when General Porter should have been coming into action in compliance with this order, I directed Generals Heintzelman and Reno to assault the left of the enemy. The attack was made with great gallantry, and the whole of the left of the enemy was doubled back toward his center, and our forces, after a sharp conflict of an hour and a half, occupied the field of battle.

About 8 o'clock in the evening, the greater portion of the field of battle was occupied by our army. Nothing was heard of General Porter up to that time and his forces took no part whatever in the action, but were suffered by him to lie idle on their arms, within sight and sound of the battle, during the whole day. So far as I know, he made no effort whatever to comply with my orders or to take any part in the action.

I do not hesitate to say that if he had discharged his duty as became a soldier under the circumstances, and had made a vigorous attack upon the enemy, as he was expected and directed to do, at any time up to 8 o'clock that night, we should have utterly crushed or captured the larger portion of Jackson's force before he could have been by any possibility sufficiently re-enforced to have made any effective resistance.

I believe—in fact, I am positive—that at 5 o'clock in the afternoon of the 29th, General Porter had in his front no considerable body of the enemy. I believed then, as I am very sure now, that it was easily practicable for him to have turned the right flank of Jackson and to have fallen upon his rear; that if he had done so we should have gained a decisive victory over the army under Jackson before he could have been joined by any of the forces of Longstreet; and that the army of General Lee would have been so crippled and checked by the destruction of this large force as to have been no longer in condition to prosecute further operations of an aggressive character.

I speak thus freely of the strange failure of General Porter, not because I am more convinced of its unfortunate results now than I was at that time, but because a full investigation of the whole subject, made by a court martial, has fully justified and confirmed that opinion. . . .

On the morning of the 30th, as may be supposed, our troops, who had been so continually marching and fighting for so many days, were in a state of great exhaustion. They had had little to eat for two days previous, and the artillery and cavalry horses had been in harness and saddled continually for ten days, and had had no forage for two days previous. It may easily be imagined how little these troops, after such severe labor, and after undergoing such hardships and privation, were in condition for active and efficient service.

I had telegraphed to the General-in-Chief on the 28th our condition, and had begged of him to have rations and forage sent forward to us from Alexandria with all dispatch. I also called his attention to the imminent need of cavalry horses to enable the cavalry . . . to perform any service whatever.

About daylight of the 30th, I received a note from General Franklin, . . . written by direction of General McClellan, and dated at 8 o'clock the evening before, informing me that rations and forage would be loaded into the available wagons and cars at Alexandria as soon as I would send back a cavalry escort to bring out the trains.

Such a letter, when we were fighting the enemy and Alexandria was swarming with troops, needs no comment. Bad as was the condition of our cavalry, I was in no situation to spare troops from the front, nor could they have gone to Alexandria and returned within the time by which we must have had provisions or have fallen back in the direction of Washington, nor do I see what service cavalry could have rendered in guarding railroad trains



It was not until I received this letter that I began to feel discouraged and nearly hopeless of any successful issue to the operations with which I was charged, but I felt it to be my duty, notwithstanding the desperate condition of my command, from great fatigue, from want of provisions and forage, and from the small hope that I had of any effective assistance from Alexandria, to hold my position at all hazards and under all privations unless overwhelmed by superior forces of the enemy.

I had received no sort of information of any troops coming forward to my assistance since the 24th, and did not expect on the morning of the 30th that any assistance would reach me from the direction of Washington, but I determined again to give battle to the enemy on the 30th, and at least to lay on such blows as would cripple him as much as possible and delay as long as practicable any farther advance toward the Capital.

I accordingly prepared to renew the engagement. At that time my effective forces . . . were estimated by me and others as follows: McDowell's Corps, including Reynold's division, 12,000 men; Sigel's Corps, 7,000 men; Reno's, 7,000; Heintzelman's, 7,000; Porter's Corps, which had been in no engagement, and was . . . perfectly fresh, at about 12,000 men; including the brigade of Piatt, which formed part of Sturgis' division, and the only portion that ever joined me; but of this force the brigades of Piatt and Griffin, numbering . . . about 5,000 men, had been suffered to march off on daylight on the 30th, to Centreville, and were available for operations on that day. This reduced Porter's effective force on the field to about 7,000 men, and gave me a total force of 40,000 men . . .

Between 12 and 2 o'clock in the day I advanced the corps of Porter, supported by King's division . . . to attack the enemy along the Warrenton turnpike. . . .

It was necessary to act thus promptly and make an attack, as I had not the time, for want of provisions and forage, to await an attack from the enemy, nor did I think it good policy under the circumstances. During the night of the 29th and the morning of the 30th, the advance of the main army under Lee was arriving on the field. . . . So that by 12 or 1 o'clock in the day we were confronted by forces greatly superior to our own, and these forces were being every moment largely increased. . . . Every moment of delay increased the odds against us, and I therefore advanced to the attack as rapidly as I was able to bring my forces into action. . . . The attack of Porter was neither vigorous nor persistent, and his troops soon retired in considerable confusion. As soon as they commenced to fall back the enemy advanced to the assault and our whole line from right to left was soon furiously engaged. . . .

The action raged furiously for several hours, the enemy bringing up his heavy reserves and pouring mass after mass of his troops upon our left. . . . Porter's forces were rallied and brought to a halt as they were retiring to the rear. As soon as they could be used I pushed them forward to support our left, and they there rendered most distinguished service, especially the brigade of Regulars under Colonel Buchanan.

About 6 o'clock in the afternoon I heard accidentally that Franklin's Corps had arrived at a point about 4 miles east of Centreville and 12 miles in our rear, and that it was only about 8,000 strong. . . .

At no time could I have hoped to fight a successful battle with the immensely superior force of the enemy which confronted me, and which was able at any time to outflank me and bear my small army to the dust. It was only by constant movement, by incessant watchfulness, and by hazardous skirmishes and battles that the forces under

my command were not overwhelmed, whilst at the same time the enemy was embarrassed and delayed in his advance upon Washington until the forces from the Peninsula were at length assembled for the defense of that city. . . .

It seems proper to me, since so much misrepresentation has been put into circulation as to the support I received from the Army of the Potomac, to state here precisely what forces of that army came under my command and were at any time engaged in the active operations of the campaign. . . . This small fraction of 20,500 men was all of the 91,000 veteran troops from Harrison's Landing which ever drew trigger under my command or in any way took part in that campaign. By the time that the corps of Franklin and Sumner, 19,000 strong, joined me at Centreville, the original army of Virginia, as well as the corps of Heintzelman and the division of Reynolds, had been so much cut up . . . and were so much broken down . . . by constant and excessive duties . . . that they were in little condition for any effective service whatever. . . .

Such is the history of a campaign, substantiated by documents written during the operations . . . which has been misunderstood to an extent perhaps unparalleled in the history of warfare. I submit it here to the public judgment, with all confidence that it will be fairly and deliberately considered, and a just verdict pronounced upon it and upon the army engaged in it.

Upon such unbiased judgment I am very willing, setting side any previous record I have made during this war, to rest my reputation as a soldier. I shall submit cheerfully to the verdict of my countrymen, but I desire that that verdict shall be rendered upon a full knowledge of the facts. . . ."

The tone of frankness, strict business sincerity and

fidelity, which so distinctively characterize all the reports, correspondence and actions of General Pope, must be convincing to the general reader of the truth of the statements he makes, were any further corroboration of the truth of those statements necessary .

He could with "confidence," well and safely submit his record as a loyal, faithful and efficient soldier, to the "un-biased judgment of his countrymen," without fear that the verdict of a grateful people would award to his memory the crown of honor so long withheld from him, and to which his merits and unselfish devotion, and service to his country, so justly entitled him.

The hand of time rights all things, but it is a strange and sad commentary on a great and generous government, that it should, for one moment, permit of such unmerited and unjustifiable treatment; or, hesitate in withholding, proper and befitting acknowledgement of the faithful and devoted service and sacrifice, of one to whom it was so deeply and lastingly indebted.

For this act of ingratitude, and blind injustice on the part of the government; the almost fatal blunders which immediately followed as the logical result of that blindness, with their consequent enormous expenditures of money; the accompanying terrors and disasters; seem almost like penalties inflicted by retributive justice upon a guilty nation.

On the 21st day of January, 1863, President Lincoln "approved and confirmed" the "proceedings, findings, and sentence," of a court martial in the case of Gen. Fitz John Porter, that "he be, and he hereby is, cashiered and dismissed from the service of the United States as a major general of volunteers, and as colonel and brevet brigadier general in the regular service of the United States, and forever disqualified from holding any office

of trust or profit under the Government of the United States.”

By the persistent and continuous efforts of General Porter, through military and political influences, he succeeded finally in securing a rehearing before a “Board of officers,” and, as a result of such hearing, on the 4th day of May, 1882, President Chester A. Arthur by proclamation, granted “full remission of that part of said sentence which has not yet been completely executed.”

## CHAPTER XII

### MCCLELLAN'S CAMPAIGN IN MARYLAND

Gen. Halleck writes to McClellan—Hooker to command Porter's Corps—Franklin's Corps attached to Heintzelman's—Enemy crossing the Potomac—McClellan asks for suspension of order relieving Porter and Franklin from their commands—Wants Hooker assigned to McDowell's Corps—McDowell relieved at own request and Reno appointed to that command—McClellan orders Hooker to displace Reno—Lee's mysterious movements—General conditions and state of public feeling—Great alarm felt—A glance at some preceding events—Gen. Banks obeys an order from the President—Is rebuked by McClellan, who orders its suspension—McClellan asks suggestions from General Wool—Wool explains the situation—Great alarm in Pennsylvania—McClellan advises the Governor to call out the militia—Frantic appeals to the President and War Department—The President replies to Governor Curtin—The burdens of the President and Secretary of War—The President's dispatch to Curtin—Gen. Hooker's indignation at orders to Gen. Reynolds—The rebels leaving Maryland—The President entreats McClellan not to let them escape "without being hurt"—McClellan secures information of Lee's plans—Expects an engagement—Battle of South Mountain—Hooker and Reno gain a victory—Reno killed—Rebel army retreats in a panic—Harper's Ferry surrendered—The battle of Antietam—Immensity of Ordinance and Commissary Stores—McClellan reports a complete victory—Maryland and Pennsylvania safe—Strength of the respective armies.

**O**N September 5th, 1862, the same day that General Pope was relieved of his command of the Army of Virginia, General Halleck addressed the following "confidential" letter to General McClellan:

"General: The President has directed that General Pope be relieved and report to the War Department; that Hooker be assigned to command of Porter's Corps, and that Franklin's Corps be temporarily attached to Heintzelman's.

The orders will be issued this afternoon. Generals

Porter and Franklin are to be relieved from duty until the charges against them are examined. I give you this memorandum in advance of the orders, so that you may act accordingly in putting forces in the field."

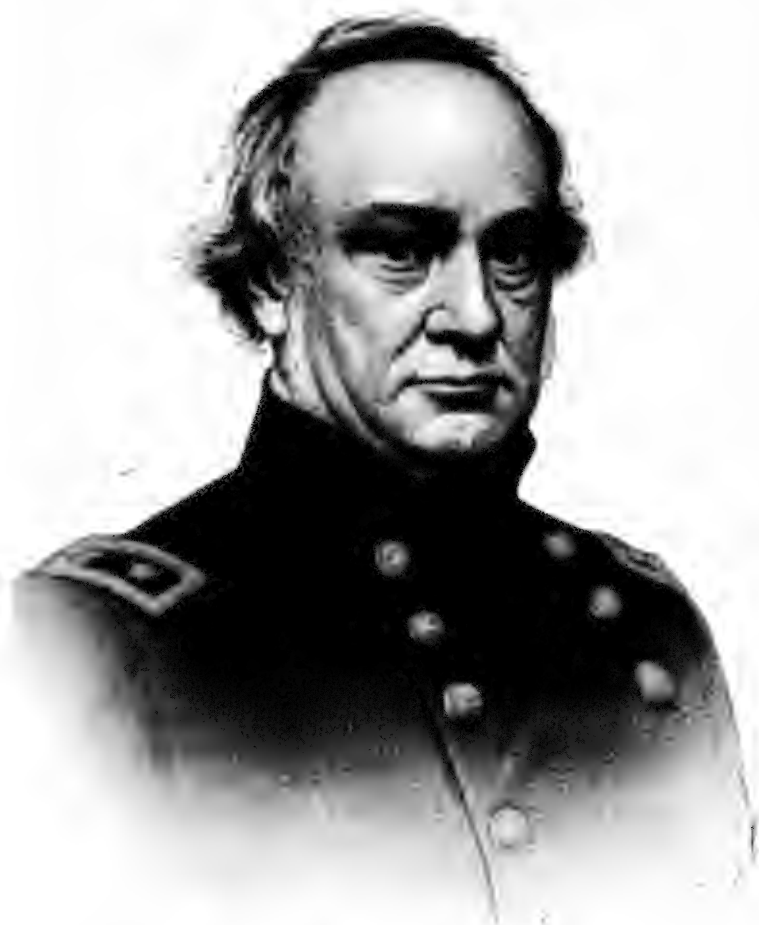
On the same date he also telegraphed him: "I think there can now be no doubt that the enemy are crossing the Potomac in force, and that you had better dispatch General Sumner and additional forces to follow. If you agree with me, let our troops move immediately."

He likewise telegraphed to General Wool, who was in command at Baltimore, "I find it impossible to get this army into the field again in large force for a day or two. In the meantime Harper's Ferry may be attacked and overwhelmed. I leave all dispositions there to your experience and local knowledge. I beg leave, however, to suggest the propriety of withdrawing all our forces in that vicinity to Maryland Heights. I have no personal knowledge of the ground, and merely make the suggestion to you."

On Sept. 6th General McClellan addressed the following letter to General Halleck: "General Sherman reports the enemy moving toward Rockville. It will save me a great deal of trouble and invaluable time if you will suspend the operation of the order in regard to Franklin and Porter until I can see my way out of this difficulty. I wish to move Franklin's Corps to the front at once. To prevent a change in Burnside's command while on the march, I would urgently recommend that Hooker be assigned to McDowell's Corps.

The Secretary told me he would cheerfully agree to anything of this kind that met your approval, and I really feel it necessary to ask for these things at once."

The compliance of the War Department to this request of General McClellan was the cause for the strenuous



*St W Halleck.*





complaint made by General Pope, to the retention of those officers in the service.

At this time General McDowell, at his own request, was by special orders relieved from the command of the Third Army Corps, and Major General Reno was, by direction of the President, assigned to the command. However, on the same day, by special orders from General McClellan, General Hooker was assigned to McDowell's Corps and ordered to assume command immediately.

During the meantime General Lee's forces were steadily and mysteriously moving through Maryland and on towards Pennsylvania, causing widespread alarm. All their movements were shrouded in doubt and uncertainty. Nobody knew definitely, either their approximate strength or supposed destination. It was certain, however, they were in Maryland in force and making raids in Pennsylvania.

The general conditions, and the state of public feeling at that time, will be best understood from the following dispatches and correspondence:

On Sept. 7th Governor Curtin sent the following dispatch and copy of a report he had received from Chambersburg to General Wool at Baltimore: "The following particulars have just come to hand. What can be done?" Received full particulars concerning invasion of Maryland. Rebels arrived at Frederick City to-day (6th) at 11 o'clock. . . Whole force seen amounted to 3,500. Were shoeless, unclad, taking possession of all stores having shoes, army goods, or other supplies, paying for same Confederate scrip. Announced their destination Baltimore. . . Jackson told an intimate friend of mine . . . he designed crossing into Pennsylvania, through Adams, York, and Lancaster to Philadelphia. I believe he designs to invade Cumberland Valley, to procure sup-

plies. Large numbers of persons came up on train to-night from Hagerstown."

Later the same day he telegraphed to Secretary Stanton: "Our information is that Jackson occupies Frederick in force, and is preparing to move north. We are organizing militia and arming to meet him. I suggest that, if possible, you send some artillery to this valley. . . ." And General Wool telegraphed the President: "Your dispatch received. General Hill is menacing Harper's Ferry, but with what force is not stated. Bragg is reported to be advancing through the valley of Shenandoah with 40,000 men—it is said for Pennsylvania. More than 30,000 men were reported in and near Frederick yesterday, with three batteries, and more coming, and numbers of cavalry not stated and not included in the above estimate."

Rebels proclaimed that they were going either to Philadelphia or Baltimore. All my information is second hand. I have no doubt that the rebels have a large force in and about Frederick. They were much in want of supplies. This force was commanded by Stonewall Jackson and Johnson."

On the following day, Thomas A. Scott, Pres. of the Penna. R. R., telegraphed Secretary Stanton as follows: "If it be possible to send a brigade of disciplined troops to this point (Harrisburg), as a nucleus for an army, it ought to be done immediately, and then concentrate new regiments here until a large army is organized, to stop movements of enemy into Pennsylvania. The people need something to restore confidence, in order to get them to step forward in support of the Government."

If no organization is made, they will leave en masse as the enemy approaches. From this point a column could be readily transferred to any other place where their ser-

vice might be acquired. Can anything be done to meet this view of the case?

The same day Governor Curtin again telegraphed the Secretary: "I shall tomorrow, unless otherwise advised by you, call out the militia of the State, and mass as many men as possible here, to operate as may be best. Would it not be well to leave the two New York regiments here as a nucleus of the organization? It is now a matter of great doubt whether communication with Washington will not be interrupted before any more forces from here could be passed through. In case communication should be interrupted, what shall be done with forces reaching here and Philadelphia from the East? Shall they be massed in Pennsylvania? Answer explicitly. I shall be ready to perform any duty that may be required of me in such an emergency."

On the 9th General McClellan reported to General Halleck from Rockville, Md., "From such information as can be obtained, Jackson and Longstreet have about 110,000 men of all arms near Frederick, with some cavalry this side."

At this point it will be proper to take a retrospective glance at some of the preceding occurrences of the year. It will be remembered that immediately after the battle of Williamsburg, in a letter addressed to General McClellan by President Lincoln, the latter cautioned him about "putting his foot on the necks of Generals Sumner, Heintzelman and Keyes, all at once," and also of his favoritism to Generals Porter and Franklin. A recent letter will also be recalled of General Pope addressed to General Halleck, wherein the latter is warned of the current opinion that McClellan was the real commander of the army and he, "but a tool," and also of the determined purpose through intrigue or otherwise, to "get rid" of certain officers.

It may have perhaps been noted that when the Army of

the Potomac was withdrawn from the Peninsula, General Keyes, who had urgently advocated that movement much to McClellan's displeasure, was side tracked at Yorktown very much against his will and earnest protest, and since then he quietly disappears from view.

General Wool, a very competent, able, and trustworthy officer, who, as may be inferred from his correspondence did not have a very exalted opinion of McClellan's fighting qualities or courage, was removed from the command at Fort Monroe to Baltimore, and from thence later, to Philadelphia still further from the field of operations. General McDowell, soon after Pope's retirement, was relieved from his command at his own request, and General Reno, another one of General Pope's trusted lieutenants was, by the President, assigned to his command, but, at the instance of General McClellan was replaced by General Hooker. Generals Porter and Franklin, who by order of the President had been suspended from their commands, were reinstated thereto through the influence of General McClellan, and when the army marched into Maryland General Heintzelman was left at Alexandria.

All these circumstances may, or may not, have been mere coincidences but the following dispatches will illustrate the power of McClellan's hypnotic influence and his contempt for any authority over him.

Upon the withdrawal of General Pope's army within the intrenchments of Washington, General McClellan had been placed in command of all its defenses, and when he took the field in Maryland he assigned this command during his absence from the city to General Banks'

On Sept. 9th, General Halleck gave General Banks', the following notice: "General: Major General Heintzelman is placed by the President in command of all the troops for the defense of Washington south of the Potomac, subject, however, to your general orders.

General Heintzelman should be directed to establish his lines of battle, as well as the defenses of the forts, and see that lines of communication be kept open in their rear, so that any point of attack can be readily re-enforced. Great care should be taken to establish outposts and pickets. Another point which requires immediate attention on both sides of the river is the picking up and organizing of stragglers. Special details should be made for this purpose."

In compliance with these directions, General Banks immediately gave orders for General Heintzelman to at once assume his command.

On the following morning General Banks received the following command from General McClellan: "I have heard to-day that General Heintzelman has been placed in command of everything on the Virginia side of the river. I prefer not to have this done, unless there is some good reason for it. Please communicate with me before carrying this order into effect, giving me your reasons for the proposed change. Please recollect that I am still responsible for the defense of Washington, and that no change can be made in my arrangements without consulting me. I wish to give you the fullest latitude, but at the same time I desire to be consulted as to any changes made in important commands. Please reply immediately. Suspend the operation of the order until you hear from me."

Sept. 8th, General McClellan from Rockville, Md., sent a dispatch to General Halleck for his approval and to be forwarded in cipher to General Wool at Baltimore as follows: "This army is now massed between Rockville and Brookville, in position to move on the enemy should he attempt to go toward Baltimore from any point above here, to advance into Pennsylvania, or attack Washington. Our information regarding the enemy's movements is very vague and conflicting. If the enemy has crossed the Po-

tomac in large force, it seems to me of great importance that we should co-operate fully, and it will give me great pleasure to have the benefit of any suggestion that your extended military experience may dictate.

I shall from time to time, keep you advised of all that occurs with me, and I shall feel under great obligations if you will give me such information as you may deem of importance to me. I should be especially gratified to learn everything that you can get regarding the movements of the enemy in the direction of Harper's Ferry and above,  
."

To this request of General McClellan, General Wool the following day replied: " Major Generals Lee and Stonewall Jackson, Brigadier General Lee and Maj. Gen. D. H. Hill are at Frederick, with a large force; some say the whole rebel army. They are in a position to take one of three or four roads, to Chambersburg, to Hagerstown, to Baltimore, or to recross the Potomac. General Burnside is not far from Cooksville, and Sigel is reported to be near Poolesville.

Where the enemy is going is more than I can conjecture. It appears to be concentrated, and it is thought it intends moving to-day. Our forces ought to be within reach of each other, or they may be beaten in detail.

The rebels, it is said in knowing circles, are not coming to Baltimore. If they do, I will prevent their occupying the city of Baltimore longer than to pass through it. I would urge concentration of the forces of Burnside and Sigel.  
."

Thus, while there was great uncertainty regarding the numbers and precise purpose of the rebel forces, great alarm prevailed throughout Pennsylvania. Rumors of all kinds flew thick and fast, and the federal authorities were being constantly deluged with frantic appeals, advice, and suggestions, in corresponding ratio and value.

On Sept. 10th, Governor Curtin telegraphed to General McClellan at Rockville, Md., that he had received information that "the rebel force around Frederick was not less than 120,000 men, and the part under Lee had not yet joined that army." That, "it was believed that the whole rebel army in Maryland would exceed 200,000 men, and their intention was to march either upon Harrisburg or Baltimore." That, "they were ragged and filthy, but full of fight," that the enemy had selected his ground, had massed his force near Frederick to give him battle, the result of which would probably decide the future of our country."

To this General McClellan replied, that "Everything he could learn, induced him to believe that the information the governor had received was substantially correct," and he advised him "to call out the militia, especially mounted men," and "concentrate all the troops he could in the vicinity of Chambersburg," assuring the Governor that he "would follow them as closely as he could, and fight them whenever he could find them," and "destroy any army having the temerity to attempt the invasion of Pennsylvania."

On the same date, Thomas A. Scott, sent the following dispatch to Secretary Stanton: "We want an active, energetic officer to command forces in the field, and one that could rally Pennsylvanians around him. It is believed that General Reynolds would be the most useful, and I hope you will arrange to send him after your interview with Colonel Wright in the morning, who will explain fully all the reasons." He also sent the Secretary the same day, the following dispatch:

"Colonel Wright, of Governor Curtin's staff, will arrive in Washington early to-morrow morning, and drive direct to your house. It is important that he should see you at the earliest moment possible. Do not detail a gen-



eral officer for Pennsylvania until he sees you. The rebels are now in Cumberland Valley, and it is fair to presume their object is the capture of the capital of Pennsylvania. What can you do to aid with forces to meet this movement of Jackson? . . .”

In the meantime numerous committees, composed of the most prominent and influential citizens of Philadelphia were telegraphing to the President and Secretary of War. One committee asked for “all the aid in troops, arms, and material of war which can be spared for the defense of Philadelphia,” and the detail for service there of some “experienced general of the army for the purpose of providing defenses, organizing and disciplining the militia, etc.” Another one “earnestly entreated the President to create a military district of the city and adjacent country and assign a general of known energy and capacity to the command.” Still another, made the following appeal: “Under our militia laws we are utterly defenseless, and, besides, are clogged with commanders who cannot be removed. Therefore, we ask for a military governor, to be appointed by the President. We implore you to give us one who combines the sagacity of the statesman with the acuteness and skill of the soldier. Give us a man whose heart is in the war, and who has no sympathy with secession or its adherents in this city.” And yet another, represented, “the immediate necessity of putting the city and its defenses under the charge of United States military general officers having the public confidence, such as General O. M. Mitchell, with General George G. Meade.”

In reply to the request for troops, the President made this reply: “Your dispatch received and referred to General Halleck, who must control the questions presented. While I am not surprised at your anxiety, I do not think you are in any danger. If half our troops were in Philadelphia, the enemy could take it, because he would not

fear to leave the other half in his rear; but with the whole of them here, he dares not leave them in his rear.”

On the 11th, Governor Curtin again telegraphed to the President the following: “I have information this evening of a private character, which I deem entirely reliable, that the whole of the rebel army has been moved from Frederick, and their destination is Harrisburg and Philadelphia. You should order a strong guard placed upon the railroad lines from Washington to Harrisburg tonight, and send here not less than 80,000 disciplined forces and order from New York and states east all available forces to concentrate here (Harrisburg) at once. To this we will add all the militia forces possible, and I think that in a few days we can muster 50,000 men. It is our only hope to save the north and crush the rebel army. Do not suppose for one instant that I am unnecessarily alarmed. I believe I know all that I have stated to be true. . . . The time for decided action by the National Government has arrived. What may we expect?”

From the preceding dispatches with their varied suggestions, requests and advice, when considered in connection with the multitudinous demands of like tenor, upon the time and attention of the President and Secretary of War, from the several armies in the fields, and from all other sections of the country; one can form some faint idea of the tremendous burdens and cares under which they were weighted and so patiently struggled during the dark days of the country's peril.

In reply to Governor Curtin's dispatch, the President on the 12th, sent the following answer:

“Your dispatch asking for 80,000 disciplined troops to be sent to Pennsylvania is received. Please consider we have not to exceed 80,000 disciplined troops, properly so called, this side of the mountains, and most of them with many of the new regiments are now close in the rear of

the enemy supposed to be invading Pennsylvania—Start half of them to Harrisburg and the enemy will turn upon and beat the remaining half, and then reach Harrisburg before the part going there, and beat it, too, when it comes.

"The best possible security for Pennsylvania is putting the strongest force possible into the enemy's rear."

Regarding the efforts to have General Reynolds assigned to Pennsylvania, General Hooker in a dispatch to Asst. Adj't General Williams, has this to say: "I have just been shown an order relieving Brigadier General Reynolds from a command of a division in my corps—I request that the major-general commanding will not need this order; a scared Governor ought not to be permitted to destroy the usefulness of an entire division of the army, on the eve of important operations.

General Reynolds commands a division of Pennsylvania troops of not the best character; is well known to them, and I have no officer to fill his place.

It is satisfactory to my mind that the rebels have no more intention of going to Harrisburg than they have of going to heaven.

It is only in the United States that atrocities like this are entertained."

On the evening of Sept. 12th, President Lincoln telegraphed General McClellan as follows:

"Governor Curtin telegraphs me: 'I have advices that Jackson is crossing the Potomac at Williamsport, and probably the whole rebel army will be drawn from Maryland.'

Receiver nothing from Harper's Ferry or Martinsburg to day, and positive information from Wheeling that the line is cut, corroborates the idea that the enemy is recrossing the Potomac—Please do not let him get off without being hurt."

On the morning of the 13th, General McClellan reported

as follows from Frederick City, Md., to General Halleck: “An order from General R. E. Lee, addressed to General D. H. Hill, which has accidentally come into my hands this evening—the authenticity of which is unquestionable—discloses some of the plans of the enemy, and shows most conclusively that the main rebel army is now before us, including Longstreet’s, Jackson’s, the two Hill’s, McLaws’, Walker’s, R. H. Anderson’s and Hood’s commands.

That army was ordered to march on the 10th, and to attack and capture our forces at Harper’s Ferry and Martinsburg yesterday by surrounding them with such a heavy force that they conceived it impossible they could escape. . . . It may, therefore, in my judgment, be regarded as certain that this rebel army, which I have good reasons for believing amounts to 120,000 men or more, and know to be commanded by Lee in person, intended to attempt penetrating Pennsylvania. The officers told their friends here that they were going to Harrisburg and Philadelphia. My advance has pushed forward to-day, and overtaken the enemy on the Middletown and Harper’s Ferry roads, and several slight engagements have taken place, in which our troops have driven the enemy from their position. . . .

This army marches forward early to-morrow morning, and will make forced marches, to endeavor to relieve Colonel Miles, but I fear, unless he makes a stout resistance, we may be too late. . . . Unless General Lee has changed his plans, I expect a severe general engagement to-morrow. I feel confident that there is now no rebel force immediately threatening Washington or Baltimore, but that I have the mass of their troops to contend with, and they outnumber me when united.”

The following morning he again telegraphed: “We occupy Middletown and Jefferson. The whole force of the

enemy in front. They are not returning to Virginia. Look well to Chambersburg. Shall lose no time. Will soon have a decisive battle."

In the evening of the same day he telegraphed again as follows: "After a very severe engagement, the corps of Hooker and Reno have carried the heights commanding the Hagerstown road. The troops behaved magnificently

. The action continued until after dark, and terminated leaving us in possession of the entire crest. It has been a glorious victory. . . . I am hurrying up everything from the rear, to be prepared for any eventuality. I regret to add that the gallant and able General Reno was killed."

On the morning of the 15th, General McClellan telegraphed to General Halleck from Bolivar, Md. "I have just learned from General Hooker, in the advance, who states that the information is perfectly reliable that the enemy is making for Shepherdstown in a perfect panic; and General Lee last night stated publicly that he must admit they had been shockingly whipped. I am hurrying everything forward to endeavor to press their retreat to the utmost."

In a later dispatch the same day he said: . . . Information this moment received completely confirms the rout and demoralization of the rebel army. General Lee is reported wounded and Garland killed. Hooker alone has over 1,000 more prisoners. It is stated that Lee gives his loss as 15,000. We are following as rapidly as the men can move."

On the 16th, he telegraphed: "The enemy yesterday held a position just in front of Sharpsburg. When our troops arrived in sufficient force it was too late in the day to attack. This morning a heavy fog has thus far prevented us doing more than to ascertain that some of the enemy are still there. Will attack as soon as sit-

uation of enemy is developed. I learn Miles (D. S.) surrendered (Harper's Ferry) 8 a. m. yesterday, unconditionally. I fear his resistance was not as stubborn as it might have been. Had he held the Maryland Heights he would inevitably have been saved. . . ."

At 1.20 p. m. Sept. 17th, General McClellan sent the following dispatch to General Halleck: . . . We are in the midst of the most terrible battle of the war—perhaps of history. Thus far it looks well, but I have great odds against me. Hurry up all the troops possible. Our loss has been terrific, but we have gained much ground. I have thrown the mass of the army on the left flank. Burnside is now attacking the right, and I hold my small reserve, consisting of Porter's (Fifth) corps, ready to attack the center as soon as the flank movements are developed. I hope that God will give us a glorious victory."

On the following morning he again reported: "The battle of yesterday continued for fourteen hours, and until after dark. We held all we gained, except a portion of the extreme left; that was obliged to abandon a part of what it had gained. Our losses very heavy, especially in general officers. The battle will probably be renewed to-day. Send all the troops you can by the most expeditious route."

It will be of interest to note the following dispatch sent this day by the Chief of Ordnance at Washington, to General McClellan, Near Hagerstown: "Four hundred and fourteen wagon loads of field and small arm ammunition have been sent to Frederick, for your army, since Saturday last. Besides this, the duplicate supplies to be sent to Frederick and Hagerstown are being pushed forward with all possible dispatch. . . ."

On the same date, the Quartermaster General reported: "Six hundred thousand rations were sent some days since from Baltimore to Frederick. Captain Bell, commissary

of subsistence, is now moving a train of 500,000 rations through Baltimore, on its way to establish a depot at Hagerstown.

I telegraphed Colonel Crosman to send grain daily to Hagerstown, till he gets forward 50,000 bushels, unless countermanded by you, in consequence of movements.  
 . . . .”

At 10.30 a. m. Sept. 19th, General McClellan sent the following dispatch to General Halleck: “Pleasanton is driving the enemy across the river. Our victory was complete. The enemy is driven back into Virginia. Maryland and Pennsylvania are now safe.”

Thus was ended the battle of Antietam.

According to the “certified official returns,” the strength of the Army of the Potomac Sept. 20th, 1862, was as follows:

	Aggregate Present for Duty.	Aggregate Present and Absent
General McClellan and Staff, etc. . . . .	1,393	2,568
General Meade, 1st Corps. . . . .	12,237	31,583
General Sumner, 2d Corps. . . . .	13,604	27,770
General F. J. Porter, 5th Corps. . . . .	19,477	32,679
General Franklin, 6th Corps. . . . .	11,862	23,356
General Burnside, 9th Corps. . . . .	10,734	24,345
General A. S. Williams, 12th Corps. . . . .	8,383	17,159
General Pleasanton, Cavalry . . . . .	4,543	7,686
Col. Allen, Frederick City. . . . .	1,110	2,263
Major Scott, Boonesborough, Md. . . . .	318	442
General Kenly, Williamsport. . . . .	2,269	3,701
General Banks, Defenses of Wash'n. . . . .	71,210	107,839
<hr/>		
Grand total . . . . .	164,359	293,798
Gen. Wool, Middle Dpt. 8th Army C'ps . . . . .	20,682	22,529

The “abstract from field returns of the Army of North-

ern Virginia, commanded by General R. E. Lee, for Sept. 22, 1862," was as follows:

	Present for Duty Officers.	Aggregate Present. Enlisted Men.	
Longstreet's Corps:			
General Staff .....	11		11
McLaw's Division .....	269	3,659	4,018
Jones' Division .....	350	3,460	4,403
Anderson's Division .....	389	4,935	6,298
Walker's Division .....	221	3,207	3,871
Hood's Division .....	255	2,592	2,847
Evans' Brigade .....	40	516	556
Lee's and Walton's battalions of Artillery .....	39	632	677
Total .....	1,574	19,001	22,681
Jackson's Corps:			
D. H. Hill's Division.....	332	4,739	5,821
A. P. Hill's Division.....	342	4,435	5,468
Ewell's Division .....	298	3,144	4,066
Jackson's own division.....	186	2,367	3,484
Total .....	1,158	14,685	18,839
Grand total .....	2,732	33,686	41,520

Note on original return.—This return is very imperfect, the cavalry and reserve artillery not being reported."



## CHAPTER XIII

Letters of General Lee—His view of the situation and his plans—Feeble condition of his army—Its strength—Proposes invasion of Pennsylvania—Desertions and straggling in his army impede his movements—McClellan reports his army exhausted—Does not feel authorized to follow the enemy—Urges the necessity of recruitment and re-organization—Resents suggestions—General Meade's report on the serious evil of straggling—Taking of life the only preventive—McClellan asks for twenty or more new regiments at once—He urges the necessity of building at once, a 900 foot R. R. bridge and a 400 foot wagon bridge at Harper's Ferry—Halleck asks for a full understanding of his plans before more troops leave Washington—The War Department also wants some information before authorizing large expenditures for bridges—Gathering in absentees—Strength of the army—In statu quo—The rebels not worried nor worrying—McClellan denies his order for bridges—The President visits the army—The enemy active—The President orders McClellan to cross the Potomac and give battle to the enemy or drive him South—"Your army must move while the roads are good"—McClellan propounds some ridiculous questions—He asks for troops from Yorktown—Halleck's incisive answer to his questions—The country becoming impatient—"The army must move"—"Is not sufficiently exercised to be efficient soldiers"—Strength of the two armies compared.

**I**N connection with the foregoing, the following letters, written by General Lee to "His Excellency President Davis," will not be without some interest, as showing the condition of the rebel army at this time, and the resolute and determined spirit and purpose which animated its leaders.

On September 3rd, he wrote from "Near Dranesville" as follows:

"The present seems to be the most propitious time since the commencement of the war for the Confederate army to enter Maryland.

The two grand armies of the United States that have been operating in Virginia, though now united, are much weakened and demoralized. Their new levies, of which

I understand 60,000 men have already been posted in Washington, are not yet organized, and will take some time to prepare for the field.

If it is ever desired to give material aid to Maryland and afford her an opportunity of throwing off the oppression to which she is now subject, this would seem the most favorable.

After the enemy had disappeared from the vicinity of Fairfax Court House, and taken the road to Alexandria and Washington, I did not think it would be advantageous to follow him farther. I had no intention of attacking him in his fortifications, and am not prepared to invest them. If I possessed the necessary munitions, I should be unable to supply provisions for the troops. I therefore determined, while threatening the approaches to Washington, to draw the troops into Loudoun, where forage and some provisions can be obtained, menace their possession of the Shenandoah Valley, and, if found practicable, to cross into Maryland. The purpose, if discovered, will have the effect of carrying the enemy north of the Potomac, and, if prevented, will not result in much evil.

The army is not properly equipped for an invasion of an enemy's territory. It lacks much of the material of war, is feeble in transportation, the animals being much reduced, and the men are poorly provided with clothes, and in thousands of instances are destitute of shoes. Still we cannot afford to be idle, and though weaker than our opponents in men and military equipments, must endeavor to harass if we cannot destroy them.

I am aware that the movement is attended with much risk, yet I do not consider success impossible, and shall endeavor to guard it from loss.

As long as the army of the enemy are employed on this frontier I have no fears for the safety of Richmond, yet I earnestly recommend that advantage be taken of this

period of comparative safety to place its defense, both by land and water, in the most perfect condition. .

I have already been told by prisoners that some of Buell's cavalry have been joined to General Pope's army, and have reason to believe that the whole of McClellan's, the larger portion of Burnside's and Cox's, and a portion of Hunter's, are united to it.

What occasions me most concern is the fear of getting out of ammunition. I beg you will instruct the Ordnance Department to spare no pains in manufacturing a sufficient amount of the best kind, and to be particular, in preparing that for the artillery, to provide three times as much of the long range ammunition as of that for smooth bore or short range guns. The points to which I desire the ammunition to be forwarded will be made known to the Department in time. If the Quartermaster's Department can furnish any shoes, it would be the greatest relief. We have entered upon September, and the nights are becoming cool."

On the following day, he wrote again from "Leesburg, as follows: . . . Since my last communication to you, with reference to the movements which I propose to make with this army, I am more fully persuaded of the benefit that will result from an expedition into Maryland, and I shall proceed to make the movement at once, unless you should signify your disapprobation. The only two subjects that give me any uneasiness are my supplies of ammunition and subsistence. Of the former I have enough for present use, and must await results before deciding to what point I will have additional supplies forwarded. Of subsistence, I am taking measures to obtain all that this region will afford; but to be able to obtain supplies to advantage in Maryland, I think it important to have the services of some one known to, and acquainted with, the resources of the country, . . . Should the results of

the expedition justify it, I propose to enter Pennsylvania, unless you should deem it unadvisable upon political or other grounds."

The "abstract from field return of the army of Northern Virginia for September 30, 1862," was as follows:

	Aggregate Present.	Aggregate Present and Absent
Longstreet's Corps:		
McLaw's Division .....	6,389	12,113
Anderson's Division .....	8,708	20,036
D. R. Jones' Division.....	4,354	8,800
Walker's Division .....	4,526	8,240
Pickett's Division .....	3,669	9,640
Hood's Division .....	3,161	7,534
Evans' Brigade .....	1,605	3,629
Walton's battalion of Artillery.....	281	355
Lee's battalion of Artillery.....	433	561
	— — —	— — —
Total .....	33,126	70,908
Jackson's Corps:		
Jackson's Division .....	4,798	12,776
Ewell's Division .....	6,473	15,218
D. H. Hill's Division .....	8,363	18,975
A. P. Hill's Division.....	9,103	20,239
	— — —	— — —
Total .....	28,738	67,208
Calvary Division (no report received).		
Reserve Artillery .....	849	1,027
	— — —	— — —
Grand total .....	62,713	139,143

Note on original Return.—This return does not prove, the returns being incorrect; but desire to send this off at once prevented sending them back for correction until transferred . . ."

General Lee, in a letter addressed to Secretary Randolph September 23d, says: ". . . You will see by the

field return this day sent to General Cooper, the woeful diminution of the present for duty of this army. The absent are scattered broadcast over the land." And in another letter of same date addressed to President Davis, in speaking about recruiting his army, he says: "

The usual casualties of battle have diminished its ranks, but its numbers have been greatly decreased by desertion and straggling. This was the main cause of its retiring from Maryland, as it was unable to cope with advantage with the numerous host of the enemy. Our stragglers are being daily collected, and that is one of the reasons of my being now stationary. How long they will remain with us, or when they will again disappear, it is impossible for me to say. . . ."

By the 20th of September, the rebel army had recrossed the Potomac and had again all returned to Virginia.

On the 22d, General McClellan reported to General Halleck: "When I was assigned to the command of this army in Washington, it was suffering under the disheartening influence of defeat. It had been greatly reduced by casualties in General Pope's campaign, and its efficiency had been much impaired.

The sanguinary battles fought by these troops at South Mountain and Antietam Creek have resulted in a loss to us of 10 general officers and many regimental and company officers, besides a large number of enlisted men. The army corps have been badly cut up and scattered by the overwhelming numbers brought against them in the battle of the 17th instant, and the entire army has been greatly exhausted by unavoidable overwork, hunger, and want of sleep and rest. When the enemy recrossed the Potomac the means of transportation at my disposal was inadequate to furnish a single day's supply of subsistence in advance.

Under these circumstances I did not feel authorized to

cross the river in pursuit of the retreating enemy, and thereby place that stream—which is liable at any time to rise above a fording stage—between this army and its base of supply.

As soon as the exigencies of the service will admit of it, this army should be reorganized. It is absolutely necessary, to secure its efficiency, that the old skeleton regiments should be filled up at once, and officers appointed to supply the numerous existing vacancies . . . I propose, as soon as the pontoon bridge can be relaid (it is expected to arrive to-day), to cross these troops and occupy Harper's Ferry and Charlestown, with a view of pushing them out into the Shenandoah Valley as soon as practicable. . . ."

In another dispatch of the same date he said: "I urgently request that the president of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company be asked to repair the canal at once. That he should do so is indispensably necessary for ulterior military operations. . . . By my direction, my chief quartermaster telegraphed last evening a dispatch similar to this to General Meigs, who replied, raising objections on the same score of want of protection to the Canal. I do not require suggestions of this kind. I shall be responsible that full protection is afforded it."

The practice of straggling, was the cause of much complaint, and was common to both armies. On Sept. 23d, General Meade, who by reason of the wounding of General Hooker at the battle of Antietam, had been placed in command of the latter's corps, reported to General Marcy, Chief of Staff, for his "inspection and consideration, a comparative statement exhibiting the strength of his corps on the 18th instant, the day after the last action, and its strength on the 22d instant: "showing an increase of strength during the four intervening days, 292 officers and 8,583 men. He said, "the development here made of

straggling and abandoning their commands on the part of officers and men, is so startling, and so important in its bearing on the reliance to be placed on the command with which I have been honored, that I deem it due to myself and the general commanding to make this communication.

How this serious and terrible evil can be cured is a difficult question to solve, inasmuch as the disease seems to pervade the whole body. Nothing, in my judgment, short of taking of life will have any effect, but that some measures are indispensable is rendered evident by the statement now inclosed."

September 24th, General McClellan telegraphed General Halleck: "I have the honor to request that at least twenty new regiments, and if possible, a greater number, be sent to me at once, to be incorporated with the old troops of this army. From Banks' morning report of the 20th instant, I think twenty regiments, at least, can be spared. I would be glad to have more than double that number with the least possible delay.

They can be made efficient much more quickly by brigading them with old troops than in any other manner.

I would be glad if you would direct General Kelley to report to me in detail the number and position of his troops, and all he knows about the movements of the enemy in his front. I am so intimately acquainted with Western Virginia that I am sure that I can be of benefit.

In the present situation of affairs there should be at least direct co-operation on the part of the commander in West Virginia and myself."

On the same day he telegraphed again as follows: "It is necessary to build a permanent double track bridge over the Potomac at Harper's Ferry; also a wagon bridge over Shenandoah at the same place, on the piers now standing. The Potomac bridge must probably be built on

crib piers, filled with stone, and will be about 900 feet in length; the Shenandoah bridge about 400 feet long . . . I cannot too strongly urge the importance of expedition in this matter. Until this or the railroad bridge is finished, it is scarcely possible to advance from Harper's Ferry, in force, and as that is clearly our true line of operations, I need not urge upon you the necessity of completing our communications there."

On September 26th, General Halleck replied to the above requests of General McClellan as follows: "General Kelley's headquarters were, at last accounts, at Cumberland. General Wool was directed to instruct him to obey your orders for the purpose of co-operation, without regard to Department lines. Before more troops are moved from here into the field, we ought to have a full understanding in regard to your future operations.

As I now understand, you propose to cross the Potomac at or above Harper's Ferry, and move up the valley. Will not this line again expose Washington, and compel us to keep up a large force here? The enemy is repairing bridges on the Rapidan and Rappahannock, preparatory to throwing a force on Washington, if it should not be properly protected. Cannot your army move, so as to cover Washington by keeping between it and the enemy? I particularly wish your views on this subject. Very few troops have arrived within the last few days. "

On the same day, General Halleck wrote to him the following: "Your telegram in relation to reconstructing bridges at Harper's Ferry was received yesterday. As I telegraphed you this morning, the War Department wishes to be informed more definitely of your plans before authorizing the expenditure of large sums of money for rebuilding bridges on the Potomac.

Of course, your movements must depend in a measure upon the position and movements of the enemy; neverthe-



less they will be subordinate to a general plan. Without knowing your plan and your views on this subject, I cannot answer the questions which are asked me by the Government. I had hoped that, instead of crossing at Harper's Ferry (unless in pursuit of a beaten army), you would be able to cross lower down the Potomac, so as to cover Washington by your line of operations, and thus avoid the necessity of keeping a large force here. In your present position the enemy threatens both your army and the capital.

Will the crossing of your forces at Harper's Ferry relieve the latter? It will if the enemy is at Martinsburg; but will it if his main force falls back on Winchester?

Moreover, his repairing the bridges over the Rapidan and Rappahannock would seem to indicate an attempt to reoccupy Manassas, or at least to threaten Washington from that direction. The number of troops to be left here will depend upon the amount of protection to be afforded by your army in the field. Your ask for Sigel's corps and twenty new regiments to be sent to Harper's Ferry, and also additional old troops. If your movements are to be such as to cover Washington, this number, and perhaps, in a few days, more, can be sent to you; but, if otherwise, we should be careful not to weaken this point too much, especially while the troops here are so very raw.

It seems to me that Washington is the real base of operations, and that it should not under any circumstances be exposed.

Please state your plans as fully as possible."

On the 28th, General Halleck directed General Banks to send "twenty regiments of new troops by railroad to Frederick, to report to General McClellan."

The same day, General McClellan addressed a long letter to the adjutant general at Washington, saying: "The reduced condition of the old regiments, and the futility of

dependence upon the recruiting service for the replenishing of their ranks, points to the necessity of earnest endeavor to collect all the absent officers and men belonging to these organizations. . . . Convalescent soldiers leave hospitals, and have done so for the past year, and return home habitually. . . . The stragglers too, are numerous in every division of the army; many of these desert. The states of the North are flooded with deserters, absentees, etc. One corps of this army has 13,000 and odd men present, and 15,000 and odd absent; of this 15,000, 8,000 probably are at work at home, deserters. They can be secured and returned, and I beg that the fullest exercise of the power of the Government may be devoted, if necessary, to the accomplishment of this end. . . .”

Deputy provost marshals were distributed throughout the North, and stringent measures were adopted to insure the return of all absentees to their respective regiments.

The strength of the Army of the Potomac according to the official returns on September 30th, was, aggregate present for duty, 173,745 and aggregate present and absent 303,959.

Meantime the army remained in statu quo; the enemy, doubtless so thoroughly familiar with the habits of their opponents, seemingly had no fears of any sudden demonstration being made against them, for on October 1st, General Kenly, commanding at Williamsport reported to General Marcy, chief of staff: “I have just received information, from a refugee who has never yet given me false rumor, that the enemy has abandoned Bunker Hill, and there is nothing but a few pickets between there and here; and, still further, that Hill’s, Longstreet’s, and Jackson’s corps have gone through Winchester, en route for Richmond; that one of Jackson’s lieutenants said that they went to Richmond to recruit, having been so much cut up, etc.

He represents that Martinsburg is entirely abandoned, but that there is an army corps . . . at Winchester, and no force above me, except a few scouts. I know not what credence to give to this, but my informant believes it to be true."

October 4th, General Halleck reported to General McClellan, that "General Bayard reports rumors that General Longstreet is moving to Leesburg, with intention to cross the river, while Jackson holds you in check at Harper's Ferry. . . ."

On the same date J. W. Garrett, president of the Baltimore and Ohio R. R. telegraphed to General Halleck: "I am in receipt of a dispatch from our agent at Wheeling, stating that the bridge over the little Cacapon River, 21 miles east of Cumberland, was destroyed by the enemy last night; and that unless General Kelley is re-enforced promptly, it is feared that great destruction of the road will follow. If nothing else can be done at present, cannot General Milroy's brigade . . . be ordered to aid threatened points? Must rely on you to do what is practicable to aid in saving this great line from the threatened calamities."

October 5th, General McClellan sent the following dispatch to General Halleck: "It is probable that I was not sufficiently explicit in the telegram I sent you regarding the construction of permanent wagon bridges across the Potomac and the Shenandoah at Harper's Ferry.

I did not intend to be understood as recommending them for our present operations, particularly with reference specially to the permanent occupation of that important strategic military position. . . ."

A reference to McClellan's previous dispatch on September 24th, wherein he "could not too strongly urge the importance of expedition" in the construction of these bridges, and, inasmuch as it was "scarcely possible to ad-

vance from Harper's Ferry, clearly the true line of operations," of the "necessity of completing our communications there," this last dispatch certainly appears somewhat remarkable.

On the 1st of October, President Lincoln visited the Army of the Potomac and spent several days there with General McClellan. During the meantime the enemy were diligently pursuing their accustomed tactics of making desultory raids, and otherwise harassing and worrying the army.

On the 6th General Halleck sent McClellan an order as follows: " . . . Major General Cox's old division will march to Hancock and take cars to Clarksburg, where it will meet and report to General Milroy. General Cox will command the District of Western Virginia, but will co-operate with you whenever he can do so." On the same day he also sent him the following dispatch: "I am instructed to telegraph you as follows:

The President directs that you cross the Potomac and give battle to the enemy or drive him south.

Your army must move now while the roads are good. If you cross the river between the enemy and Washington, and cover the latter by your operation, you can be re-enforced with 30,000 men. If you move up the Valley of the Shenandoah, not more than 12,000 or 15,000 can be sent to you. The President advises the interior line, between Washington and the enemy, but does not order it.

He is very desirous that your army move as soon as possible. You will immediately report what line you adopt and when you intend to cross the river; also to what point the re-enforcements are to be sent.

It is necessary that the plan of your operations be positively determined on before orders are given for building bridges and repairing railroads.

I am directed to add that the Secretary of War and the

General-in-Chief fully concur with the President in these instructions."

In answer to these two dispatches of General Halleck, General McClellan the same day replied as follows:

"Your telegram ordering Cox's division to Clarksburg was received before the one directing the offensive across the Potomac. Is it still intended that Cox should march at once? It is important in making my decision regarding the route to be taken by the army that I should know, first, what description of troops I am to be re-enforced with upon the Shenandoah route, and also upon the other route between the enemy and Washington; whether they are to be old or new troops, or what proportion of each. If possible, I should be glad to have Peck's division sent to me, if it can be got here within a reasonable time.

Second, will you inform me what the present condition of the Alexandria and Leesburg Railroad is; also the Manassas Gap Railroad, and what time it would require to put them in working order? It is believed that the Harper's Ferry and Winchester Railroad is not materially injured."

To these weighty inquiries of General McClellan, General Halleck on the following day replied as follows:

"Cox's division must go west at once. Couch's (Peck's) division is at Yorktown and Suffolk. The Manassas Gap road can be repaired in a few days. The Leesburg road is much more injured. Your army can reach the former in less time than would be required to repair the latter. The troops to be sent you will be partly new and partly old—mostly new.

Our scouts report the enemy in force at Mount Jackson, Sperryville and Warrenton, his artillery and heavy baggage moving to Staunton.

McAllister can be sent in Comstock's place, but must go at once. The Governor of New York wishes a list of of-

ficers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, to fill vacancies. He will also call in a few days for officers to take charge of drafted men, to fill old regiments. Have lists made of those who can be spared for that purpose. . . .” On the same day he also addressed him the following letter. “Your letter of September 28 to the Adjutant General is just received by me.

Nearly every measure recommended by you to fill up the old regiments has already been adopted. Some 2,000 convalescents have been sent to their regiments within the last four days.

Straggling is the great curse of the army, and must be checked by severe measures. Whatever measures you adopt to accomplish that object, will be approved. I think myself that shooting them while in the act of straggling from their commands is the only effective remedy that can be applied. If you apply the remedy, you will be sustained here.

We are making every possible effort to fill up the old regiments, but not much can be done at present. As soon as volunteering is over, we hope to fill them by draft. It is the only means of doing it. I have had an interview with Governor Morgan, of New York, to-day, and he will draft for that purpose in his state. As soon as this is done, volunteer officers will be detailed from the several New York regiments to bring on these drafted men, in squads of several hundred, for distribution to old companies.

But you cannot delay the operations of the army for these drafts. It must move, and the old regiments must remain in their crippled condition. The convalescents, however, will help a little. The country is becoming very impatient at the want of activity of your army, and we must push it on.

I am satisfied that the enemy are falling back toward

Richmond. We must follow them and seek to punish them. There is a decided want of legs in our troops. They have too much immobility, and we must try to remedy the defect. A reduction of baggage and baggage trains will effect something; but the real difficulty is, they are not sufficiently exercised in marching; they lie still in camp too long. After a hard march, one day is time enough to

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If we compare the average distances marched per month by our troops for the last year with that of the rebels, or with European armies in the field, we will see why our troops march no better. They are not sufficiently exercised to make them good and efficient soldiers.”

The strength of the army of the Potomac according to the official “tri-monthly returns for Oct. 10th, 1862,” was:

	Aggregate Present.	Aggregate Present and Absent.
“Total army in the field.....	130,862	200,752
Total defenses of Washington.....	95,242	120,127
	— — —	— — —
Grand total .....	226,104	320,879
Pieces of heavy artillery .....		429
Pieces of field artillery.....		305

The strength of the Army of Northern Virginia, according to the “abstract from field return for Oct. 10th, 1862,” was:

	Aggregate Present.	Aggregate Present and Absent.
Grand total .....	78,204	154,888

## CHAPTER XIV

McClellan submits his plan of campaign—Adopts line of the Shenandoah for his operations—Three days' delay necessary to supply shoes and clothing—Asks for more troops—His persistent unreadiness—Unlike Pope or Lee—Better Quartermaster than General—Comparison of the two armies—McClellan pleads deficiency of shoes and clothing a cause for delay—He urges the necessity for remounts of horses—The President appeals to his sense of pride and courage—Letters from General Lee to Davis—Has many stragglers and deserters—His horses dying from hard labor and scant food—The hardships of his army—Is pained at the sight of his bare-footed men—His anxiety lest McClellan may move upon Richmond—McClellan cites Stuart's raid as proof of his own deficiency in cavalry—Halleck refutes his claim of failure in shipments of shoes and clothing—All his requisitions promptly filled—Shows from the records McClellan's statements about horses to be false—His supply much larger than that of any of the other armies—The President suggests to McClellan that more occupation for the enemy South, would stop his cavalry raids North—Report of the Quartermaster General—McClellan's statements proven false—Halleck reports indications of more raids and tells McClellan "the inactivity of our army encourages them"—McClellan reports the army "nearly" ready to move, but he needs cavalry and artillery horses to replace those broken down—He asks whether the President desires him to move on the enemy at once, or await the arrival of fresh horses—The President has no change to make in his orders—McClellan propounds more idiotic questions and urges the necessity of intrenching at several points—He fears a junction of Bragg with Lee's army—He reports his horses lame, fatigued, and with sore tongues and unable to leave camp.

**O**CTOBER 7th, General McClellan, in response to the directions of the President, made the following reply to General Halleck:

"After a full consultation with the corps commanders in my vicinity, I have determined to adopt the line of the Shenandoah for immediate operations against the enemy, now near Winchester.

On no other line north of Washington can the army be supplied, nor can it on any other cover Maryland and Pennsylvania.



Were we to cross the river below the mouth of the Shenandoah we would leave it in the power of the enemy to recross into Maryland, and thus check the movements.

I see no objective point of strategical value to be gained or sought for by a movement between the Shenandoah and Washington. I wish to state distinctly that I do not regard the line of the Shenandoah Valley as important for ulterior objects. It is important only so long as the enemy remains near Winchester, and we cannot follow that line far beyond that point, simply because the country is destitute of supplies, and we have not sufficient means of transportation to enable us to advance more than 20 or 25 miles beyond a railway or canal terminus. If the enemy abandon Winchester and fall back upon Staunton, it will be impossible for us to pursue him by that route, and we must then take a new line of operations, based upon water or railway communication.

The only possible object to be gained by an advance from this vicinity is to fight the enemy near Winchester. If they retreat we have nothing to gain by pursuing them—in fact, cannot do so to any great distance. The objects I propose to myself are to fight the enemy if they remain near Winchester, or, failing in that, to force them to abandon the valley of the Shenandoah; then to adopt a new and decisive line of operations which shall strike at the heart of the rebellion.

I have taken all possible measures to insure the most prompt equipment of the troops, but from all that I can learn it will be at least three days before the First, Fifth and Sixth Corps are in condition to move from their present camps. They need shoes and other indispensable articles of clothing, as well as shelter tents, etc. I beg to assure you that not an hour shall be lost in carrying your instructions into effect.

Please send re-enforcements to Harper's Ferry, .

I would again ask for Peck's division, and, if possible Heintzelman's Corps. If the enemy gives fight near Winchester, it will be a desperate affair, requiring all our resources . . ."

Whatever may have been the real cause, the trouble with McClellan was, that while he was always declaring his purpose to "strike a blow at the heart of the rebellion and restore peace to a distracted country," it invariably happened, that whenever the occasion was favorably presented, he failed to strike the fatal blow. His methods of warfare, so unlike those of General's Lee or Pope, who were always alert, and actively and earnestly engaged in efforts of aggressive war; under like conditions, McClellan would be as actively engaged in making preparations to meet, or guard against some prospective evil contingency, which, under less methodical, theoretical treatment could probably never happen.

His policy of war so far as it was possible to do so, was to remove all necessarily uncomfortable, and inconvenient features of the service, by surrounding it with comforts and conveniences, if not luxuries; and while always proclaiming a desire and willingness to meet his foes,—although he claimed they always greatly outnumbered him—and engage in desperate combat, in his performances he displayed more the qualities of a careful and prudent quartermaster, rather than those of a courageous general.

His appeal for additional troops to be brought forward to him from the Peninsula, while having already at his command an army of over 226,000 well fed, well clothed and effective men, to combat a ragged and barefooted enemy of less than 80,000 and which in his opinion he judged it would "require all our own resources" to overcome, is, to say the least remarkable.

The records of the following pages will need no com-

ment, and if they fail to cause the blood of anyone claiming the birthright heritage of American citizenship, to tingle with shame and indignation, he must indeed be dead to all those feelings of patriotism which characterizes all true lovers of their country

On the 11th of October, McClellan telegraphed to General Halleck as follows: "I am compelled again to call your attention to the great deficiency of shoes and other indispensable articles of clothing that still exists in some of the corps of this army.

Upon assurances of the chief quartermaster, who based his calculations upon information received from Washington that clothing would be forwarded at certain times, corps commanders sent their wagons to Hagerstown and Harper's Ferry for it. It did not arrive as promised and has not yet arrived.

Unless some measures are taken to insure the prompt forwarding of these supplies, there will necessarily be a corresponding delay in getting the army ready to move, as the men cannot march without shoes. . . ."

October 12th, he sent this dispatch: "It is absolutely necessary that some energetic measures be taken to supply the cavalry of this army with remount horses.

The present rate of supply is 150 per week for the entire army here and in front of Washington. From this number the artillery draw for their batteries."

In reply to General McClellan's report to General Halleck Oct. 7th, regarding his proposed plan of operations of the army, the President on the 13th, wrote to him as follows:

"My dear sir: You remember my speaking to you of what I called your overcautiousness. Are you not overcautious when you assume that you cannot do what the enemy is constantly doing? Should you not claim to be at least his equal in prowess, and act upon that claim?

As I understand, you telegraphed General Halleck that you cannot subsist your army at Winchester unless the railroad from Harper's Ferry to that point be put in working order. But the enemy does now subsist his army at Winchester, at a distance nearly twice as great from railroad transportation as you would have to do, without the railroad last named.

He now waggons from Culpeper Court House, which is just about twice as far as you would have to do from Harper's Ferry. He is certainly not more than half as well provided with waggons as you are. I certainly should be pleased for you to have the advantage of the railroad from Harper's Ferry to Winchester, but it wastes all the remainder of Autumn to give it to you, and in fact ignores the question of time, which cannot and must not be ignored.

Again, one of the standard maxims of war, as you know, is to "operate upon the enemy's communications as much as possible without exposing your own." You seem to act as if this applies against you, but cannot apply in your favor.

Change positions with the enemy, and think you not he would break your communication with Richmond within the next twenty-four hours? You dread his going into Pennsylvania, but if he does so in full force, he gives up his communications to you absolutely, and you have nothing to do but to follow and ruin him.

If he does so with less than full force, fall upon and beat what is left behind all the easier. Exclusive of the water line, you are now nearer Richmond than the enemy is by the route that you can and he must take. Why can you not reach there before him, unless you admit that he is more than your equal on a march? His route is the arc of a circle, while yours is the chord. The roads are as good on yours as on his.

You know I desired, but did not order you to cross the Potomac below instead of above the Steamboat and Blue Ridge. My idea was that this would at once meet the enemy's communications, which I would seize if he would permit. If he should move northward I would follow him closely, holding his communications. If he should prevent our seizing his communications and move toward Richmond, I would press closely to him; fight him if a favorable opportunity should present, and at least try to beat him to Richmond on the inside track.

I say "try;" if we never try we shall never succeed. If he makes a stand at Winchester, moving neither north nor south, I would fight him there, on the idea that if we cannot beat him when he bears the wastage of coming to us, we never can when we bear the wastage of going to him.

This proposition is a simple truth, and is too important to be lost sight of for a moment. In coming to us he tenders us an advantage which we should not waive. We should not so operate as merely to drive him away. As we must beat him somewhere or fail finally, we can do it if at all, easier near to us than far away. If we cannot beat the enemy where he now is, we never can, he again being within the intrenchments of Richmond.

Recurring to the idea of going to Richmond on the inside track, the facility of supplying from the side away from the enemy is remarkable, as it were by the different spokes of a wheel extending from the hub toward the rim, and this, whether you move directly by the chord or on the inside arc, hugging the Blue Ridge more closely. The chord line, as you see, carries you by Aldie, Hay Market, and Fredericksburg; and you see how turnpikes, railroads and finally the Potomac, by Aquia Creek meet you at a point so from Washington; the same only becomes lengthened a little if you press closer to the Blue Ridge part of the way.

I should think it preferable to take the route nearest the enemy, disabling him to make an important move without your knowledge, and compelling him to keep his forces together for dread of you. The gaps would enable you to attack if you should wish. For a great part of the way you would be practically between the enemy and both Washington and Richmond, enabling us to spare you the greatest number of troops from here. When at length running for Richmond ahead of him enables him to move this way, if he does so, turn and attack him in the rear.

But I think he should be engaged long before such point is reached. It is all easy if our troops march as well as the enemy, and it is unmanly to say they cannot do it. . . ”

The following extracts from letters written at this time by General Lee and addressed to President Davis will not be without interest at this point. In one dated September 28th, he says: “I hope the returns to be made on the 30th instant, will show an increase of its (army) strength; still there are many stragglers out who persistently elude the search of the cavalry, and many have gone beyond our reach. . . . The supply of forage is not so plentiful, and our horses have been so reduced by labor and scant food that, unless their condition can be improved before winter, I fear many of them will die. History records but few examples of a greater amount of labor and fighting than has been done by this army during the present campaign. If arrangements could be made to pay the arrearages due the troops, and furnish them with clothes, shoes and blankets, we could yet accomplish a great deal this fall.

The number of barefooted men is daily increasing, and it pains me to see them limping over the rocky roads.”

In another letter dated October 2d, he says; “My greatest anxiety is, lest, with other troops, General McClellan may move upon Richmond. As at present there is no way

in which I can endanger his safety. I have been in hopes that he would cross the river and move up the valley where I wish to get him, but he does not seem so disposed."

And that was precisely the move McClellan purposed making. On the evening of the same day of the President's letter to McClellan, the latter telegraphed to General Halleck as follows: "The recent raid of Stuart, who, in spite of all the precautions I could take by the means at my disposal, went entirely around this army, has shown most condusively how greatly the service suffers from our deficiency in the cavalry arm. The great extent of the river line from Washington to Cumberland, the major portion of which at the present stage of water is fordable at almost every point, renders it necessary to scatter our cavalry for a very great distance in order to watch the numerous crossings.

At the time Stuart crossed, it so happened that the greater part of our cavalry was absent, near Cumberland, in pursuit of another rebel force, which had made its appearance at the Little Cacapon and other points on the Upper Potomac, destroying railroad bridges, etc. I had pickets at McCoy's Ferry, where Stuart crossed, but they were captured by his men, and in consequence of this, I did not learn of the crossing for some hours afterward.

All the cavalry that could be collected to pursue Stuart only amounted to less than 1,000 men. With these Pleasanton marched 78 miles in twenty-four hours, with a horse battery, but only came up with Stuart at the Potomac after he had marched over 90 miles during the same time, with change of horses. Cavalry is the only description of force that can prevent these raids. Our cavalry has been constantly occupied in scouting and reconnaissances, and this severe labor has worked down the horses and rendered many of them unserviceable, so that

at this time no more than one half of our cavalry are fit for active service in the field.

The enemy is well provided with cavalry, while our cavalry force, even with every man well mounted, would be inadequate to the requirement of the service and to the large infantry force with the army. I, therefore, again most strenuously urge upon the Department the imperative necessity of at once supplying this army, including the command of General Banks, with a sufficient number of horses to remount every dismounted cavalry soldier within the shortest possible time. If this is not done we shall be constantly exposed to rebel cavalry raids."

October 14th, General Halleck sent the following letter to General McClellan: "General: I have caused the matters complained of in your telegrams of the 11th and 12th to be investigated.

I am now informed by the Quartermaster General that every requisition from you for shoes and clothing had been filled and the articles forwarded as directed; that all requisitions for tents and blankets had been filled so far as the stock on hand here could furnish supplies, and that the deficiency was ordered to be immediately made up from Philadelphia and New York. There has been no delay that was not unavoidable.

In regard to horses, you say that the present rate of supply is only 150 per week (McC. claims to have stated 1050 per week) for the entire army here and in front of Washington. I find from the records that the issues for the last six weeks have been 8,754, making an average per week of 1,459. . . .

It is also reported to me that the number of animals with your army in the field is about 31,000. It is believed that your present proportion of cavalry and of animals is much larger than that of any other of our armies."

In another dispatch of the same date in answer to Mc-



McClellan, General Halleck, says: "Your telegram of 7 p. m. yesterday, is just received. As I have already intimated you, the Government has been, and is, making every possible effort to increase the cavalry force. Remounts are sent to you as rapidly as they can be procured."

The President has read your telegram, and directs me to suggest that, if the enemy had more occupation south of the river, his cavalry would not be so likely to make raids north of it."

In still another telegram, General Halleck, reported: "Scouts report that the enemy is concentrating a large cavalry force near Leesburg, preparatory for another raid either into Maryland or on Washington. Their force is estimated at from 7,000 to 10,000. No time should be lost in breaking up this expedition or in defeating its object."

On the same date Quartermaster General Meigs, in reply to inquiries made by Secretary Stanton on the subject, reported as follows: "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 13th instant, stating that complaint is made by General McClellan of the inadequate supply of cavalry horses for his command. . . . I have also seen a dispatch from General McClellan to General Halleck on this subject, in which he states that the supply to the army under his command, including that in front of Washington, has averaged only 400 horses per week, from which the artillery also is supplied."

General McClellan has fallen into some misapprehension on this subject. I find, by reports in this office, that there were issued from this depot to the army under General McClellan, including that in front of Washington:

From 1st to 30th of September . . . . .	4,494 horses
From 1st to 11th of October . . . . .	3,261 horses

Lt. Col. Ingalls, chief quartermaster  
of the Army of the Potomac under  
a special authority—purchased in  
Harrisburg, and received for issue. 1,000 horses

— —  
Total .. 8,754 horses

In addition, there were sent toward  
Centreville on the 1st day of Sep-  
tember, on order from General Pope  
and not included in the above. 1,500 horses

— —  
Total .. 10,254 horses

Thus the issues for the past six weeks  
to the army under General McClel-  
lan have been at the weekly average  
of .. . . . 1,459 horses

And if the 1,500 sent to General Pope  
just as the command was assumed  
by General McClellan be taken into  
consideration, the average weekly is-  
sue has been . . . 1,709 horses

October 15th General Halleck telegraphed General Mc-  
Clellan: "There are additional indications that the ene-  
my is preparing for another raid or a more general move-  
ment. The impression is that he will attempt to cross the  
Potomac below Point of Rocks, in order to cut off your  
communications and supplies, or to make a dash into  
Washington. The inactivity of our army encourages these  
depredations."

On the 21st of October General McClellan sent to Gen-  
eral Halleck the following dispatch:

"Since the receipt of the President's order to move on  
the enemy, I have been making every exertion to get this  
army supplied with clothing absolutely necessary for  
marching.

This; I am happy to say, is now nearly accomplished. I have also, during the same time, repeatedly urged upon you the importance of supplying cavalry and artillery horses, to replace those broken down by hard service, and steps have been taken to insure a prompt delivery.

Our cavalry, even when well supplied with horses, is much inferior in numbers to that of the enemy, but in efficiency has proved itself superior. So forcibly has this been impressed upon our old regiments by repeated success, that the men are fully persuaded that they are equal to twice their number of rebel cavalry.

Exclusive of the cavalry force now engaged in picketing the river, I have not at present over about 1,000 horses for service. Officers have been sent in various directions to purchase horses, and I expect them soon.

Without more cavalry horses our communications from the moment we march would be at the mercy of the large cavalry force of the enemy, and it would not be possible for us to cover our flanks properly, or to obtain the necessary information of the position and movements of the enemy in such a way as to insure success. My experience has shown the necessity of a large and efficient cavalry force.

Under the foregoing circumstances, I beg leave to ask whether the President desires me to march on the enemy at once, or to await the reception of the new horses, every possible step having been taken to insure their prompt arrival."

To this dispatch, General Halleck immediately replied: "Your telegram of 12 m. has been submitted to the President. He directs me to say that he has no change to make in his order of the 6th instant. If you have not been and are not now in condition to obey it, you will be able to show such want of ability.

The President does not expect impossibilities, but he is

very anxious that all this good weather should not be wasted in inactivity. Telegraph me when you will move, and on what lines you propose to march."

Four days later, viz: on the 25th, McClellan sent the following dispatch to General Halleck: "As the moment is at hand for the advance of this army, a question arises for the decision of the General-in-Chief, which, although perhaps impliedly decided by the President in his letter of the 13th, should be clearly presented by me, as I do not regard it as in my province to determine it.

The question is the extent to which the line of the Potomac should be guarded, after the army leaves, in order to cover Maryland and Pennsylvania from invasion by large or small parties of the enemy. It will always be somewhat difficult to guard the immediate line of the river, owing to its great extent and the numerous passages which exist. It has long appeared to me that the best way of covering this line would be by occupying Front Royal, Strasburg, Wardensville and Moorefield, or the debouches of the several valleys in which they are situated.

These points, or suitable places in their vicinity, should be strongly intrenched and permanently held. One great advantage of this arrangement would be the covering the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and an essential part of the system would be the construction of the line of railway from Winchester to Strasburg, and the rebuilding of the Manassas Gap Railway Bridge over the Shenandoah.

The intrenchment of Manassas Junction would complete the system for the defense of the approaches to Washington and the Upper Potomac. Many months ago I recommended this arrangement—in fact, gave orders for it to be carried into effect. I still regard it as essential under all circumstances. . . .

As I . . . command an active army in the field, my

responsibility for the safety of the line of the Potomac and the States north of it must terminate the moment I advance so far beyond that line as to adopt another for my base of operations. .

If Harper's Ferry and the river above are rendered fully secure, it is possible that the active army, if it supplies the garrison, may be reduced so much as to be inadequate to the purposes contemplated. If it is preserved intact, Maryland, Pennsylvania and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad may be unduly exposed.

I leave the decision of these grave questions to the General-in-Chief. . . . An important element in the solution of this problem is the fact that a great portion of Bragg's army is probably now at liberty to unite itself with Lee's command. I commence crossing the river at Berlin in the morning, and must ask a prompt decision of the questions proposed herein."

On the same day, General McClellan also sent two other dispatches to General Halleck which are not without their significance. The one was as follows: "When General Sumner asked for and obtained a leave of absence, he was very desirous of obtaining command of some department. From his age, state of health, and the many exposures he has undergone, I think it is very doubtful whether he can stand the fatigues of another campaign. His long and faithful service and the extreme gallantry he has so often displayed during this war alike entitle him to the most favorable consideration of the Government. I would regard it as an act of official justice, as well as a personal favor, if the wishes of General Sumner can be complied with."

The other dispatch was as follows, being an "extract from the report of Col. Robert Williams, First Massachusetts Cavalry, late of Regular United States Dragoons, now commanding a detachment of cavalry on duty

with General Newton's division at Cherry Run," and reads as follows: "I have in camp 267 horses, belonging to officers and men; of these, 128 are positively and absolutely unable to leave the camp, from the following causes viz; sore tongue, grease and consequent lameness, and sore backs. For example, the Fifth U. S. Cavalry has now in camp 70 horses; of these 53 are worthless from the above causes. Out of 139 horses, the remainder, I do not believe 50 can trot 80 miles. The other portion of my command, now absent on picket duty, has horses which are about in the same condition. . .

The number of sore back horses is exceedingly small. . . . The horses which are still sound, are absolutely broken down from fatigue and want of flesh. I will also remark that the men in my command are much in want of clothing."

## CHAPTER XV

General Halleck replies to McClellan's inquiries—The additions which had been made to his army—His entire freedom of action—Ample time to fortify places after they come into our possession—No danger from Bragg's army—He is distant 400 miles and Lee but 20—The President asks McClellan what his horses have done since Antietam to fatigue anything—Makes more pertinent inquiries—McClellan feels aggrieved—The President's sarcasm and impatience—McClellan urges necessity of filling up old regiments before going into action again—The President asks if he intends waiting for men to be drafted before going into action and demands a distinct answer—Secretary Stanton asks for information whether any want of supplies in McClellan's army ought to have prevented its advance—How long after his orders to advance before he reported supplies wanting—All his requisitions promptly filled—No armies in the world better or more promptly supplied—Three weeks' delay in movements—McClellan reports all Corps across the Potomac except Franklin's—Franklin to cross as soon as he could supply himself with some necessaries—The President removes McClellan and appoints Burnside to the command—McClellan ordered to report at Trenton—Pope's prediction verified—McClellan's exit, and his candidacy for the Presidency on a Secession platform—His record—His retention in command a mystery—Charity in his case an injustice and outrage—An inevitable verdict—Secretary Stanton's confidential letter to a friend.

**I**N reply to McClellan's lengthy and asinine dispatch of the day before, General Halleck on the 26th, responded as follows: "In addition to the command which you had when I came here, you also have the greater part of that of Major General Pope. Moreover, you have been authorized to use any troops within your reach in General Wool's department and in Western Virginia. General Bank's command is also under your direction, with the single restriction that he is not to remove troops from Washington till he has notified me of his orders.

Since you left Washington I have advised and suggested in relation to your movements, but I have given you no orders. I do not give you any now. The govern-

ment has intrusted you with defeating and driving back the rebel army in your front. I shall not attempt to control you in the measures you may adopt for that purpose. You are informed of my views, but the President has left you at liberty to adopt them or not, as you may deem best.

You will exercise your own discretion in regard to what points on the Potomac and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad are to be occupied or fortified. I will only add that there is no appropriation for permanent intrenchments on that line. Moreover, I think it will be time enough to decide upon fortifying Front Royal, Strasburg, Wardsville, and Moorefield when the enemy is driven south of them and they come into our possession.

I do not think that we need have any immediate fear of Bragg's Army. You are within 20 miles of Lee's, while Bragg is distant about 400 miles."

In response to his other dispatch, the President telegraphed him as follows: "I have just read your dispatch about sore-tongued and fatigued horses. Will you pardon me for asking what the horses of your army have done since the battle of Antietam that fatigues anything?

To this satirical dispatch of the President, McClellan of course took exceptions, which drew from the President the following reply: "Yours, in reply to mine about horses received. Of course, you know the facts better than I; still, two considerations remain. Stuart's cavalry outmarched ours, having certainly done more marked service on the Peninsula and everywhere since. Secondly will not a movement of our army be a relief to the cavalry, compelling the enemy to concentrate, instead of foraging in squads everywhere? But I am so rejoiced to learn from your dispatch to General Halleck that you begin crossing the river this morning."

Strange as it may seem this dispatch of the President,



had the effect of making McClellan feel aggrieved, whereupon the President in answer to his dispatch sent him the following telegram:

"Yours of yesterday received. Most certainly I intend no injustice to any, and if I have done any I deeply regret it.

To be told, after more than five week's total inaction of the army, and during which period we have sent to the army every fresh horse we possibly could, amounting in the whole to 7,918, that the cavalry horses were too much fatigued to move, presents a very cheerless, almost hopeless, prospect for the future, and it may have forced something of impatience in my dispatch. If not recruited and rested then, when could they ever be? I suppose the river is rising, and I am glad to believe you are crossing."

At 3 o'clock p. m., October 27th, General McClellan sent the following telegram to the President:

"Your Excellency is aware of the very great reduction of numbers that has taken place in most of the old regiments of this command, and how necessary it is to fill up these skeletons before taking them again into action. I have the honor, therefore, to request that the order to fill up the old regiments with drafted men may at once be issued."

At 3.25 o'clock the same day, the President returned the following reply: "Your dispatch of 3 p. m. to day, in regard to filling up old regiments with drafted men, is received, and the request therein shall be complied with as far as practicable.

And now I ask a distinct answer to the question—Is it your purpose not to go into action again until the men now being drafted in the State are incorporated into the old regiments?"

On the same date as the preceding dispatches, viz., Oct. 27th, Secretary Stanton addressed the following inquiry

ies to General Halleck, to wit: "It has been publicly stated that the army under General McClellan has been unable to move during the fine weather of this fall for want of shoes, clothing and other supplies. You will please report to this Department upon the following points:

1st. To whom and in what manner the requisitions for supplies to the army under General McClellan have been made since you assumed command as General-in-Chief, and whether any requisitions for supplies . . . has been made upon the Secretary of War, or communication had with him except through you.

2nd. If you, as General-in-Chief, have taken pains to ascertain the condition of the army in respect to supplies of shoes, clothing, arms and other necessities, and whether there has been any neglect or delay . . . and what has been and is the condition of that army as compared with other armies in respect to supplies.

3d. At what date after the battle of Antietam the orders to advance against the enemy were given to General McClellan, and how often have they been repeated.

4th. Whether, in your opinion, there has been any want in the army under General McClellan of shoes, clothing, arms, or other equipments . . . that ought to have prevented its advance against the enemy when the order was given.

5th. How long was it after the orders to advance were given to General McClellan before he informed you that any shoes or clothing were wanted in his army. . . "

On the 28th, in reply to the foregoing interrogatories, General Halleck made the following answers:

1st. That requisitions for supplies to the army under General McClellan are made by his staff officers on the chiefs of bureaus here. No such requisitions have been, to my knowledge, made upon the Secretary of War.

2nd. On several occasions General McClellan has telegraphed me that his army was deficient in certain supplies. All these telegrams were immediately referred to the heads of bureaus, with orders to report. It was ascertained that in every instance the requisitions had been immediately filled except one not having a full supply here.

There has not been, so far as I could ascertain, any neglect or delay in any department or bureau in issuing all supplies asked for by General McClellan, or by the officers of his staff. Delays have occasionally occurred in forwarding supplies by rail. . . . Under the excellent superintendence of General Haupt, I think these delays have been less frequent . . . than is usual with freight trains . . . From all the information I can obtain, I am of opinion that the requisitions from that army have been filled more promptly, and that the men, as a general rule, have been better supplied than our armies operating in the West. . . . In fine, I believe that no armies in the world while in campaign have been more promptly or better supplied than ours.

3d. Soon after the battle of Antietam, General McClellan was urged to give me information of his intended movements, in order that if he moved between the enemy and Washington, re-enforcements could be sent from this place.

On the 1st of October, finding that he purposed to operate from Harper's Ferry, I urged him to cross the river at once and give battle to the enemy. . . . On the 6th of October he was peremptorily ordered to cross the Potomac and give battle to the enemy, or drive him south. "Your army must move now, while the roads are good." It will be observed that three weeks have elapsed since this order was given.

4th. In my opinion there has been no such want of sup-

plies in the army under General McClellan as to prevent his compliance with the orders to advance against the enemy. . . .

5th. On the 7th of October, in a telegram in regard to his intended movements, General McClellan stated that it would require at least three days to supply the First, Fifth and Sixth corps; that they needed shoes, and other indispensable articles of clothing. On the 11th he telegraphed that a portion of his supplies sent by rail had been delayed. . . . Agents were immediately sent to investigate, and they reported that everything had gone forward. On the same date he spoke of many of his horses being broken down by fatigue.

On the 12th, he complained that the rate of supply was only 150 horses per week for the entire army there and in front of Washington. . . . General Meigs reported on the 14th, that the average issue . . . for the previous six weeks had been 1,450 per week, or 8,754 in all; and in addition, that large numbers of mules had been supplied, and that the number of animals with General McClellan's army . . . was over 31,000. . . .

In regard to General McClellan's means of promptly communicating the wants of the army . . . I report that in addition to the ordinary mails he has been in hourly communication with Washington by telegraph. . . ."

On November 1st, General McClellan reported to the President that "all the corps of this army have crossed the Potomac except Franklins, . . . I have ordered an advance this morning, and shall go forward from day to day as rapidly as possible. The enemy, in considerable force occupied Snicker's Gap yesterday. They will be driven out to-day or to-morrow, as soon as we can reach the position with sufficient force."

On the 2d, he telegraphed again from "Near Purcellville" . . . It seems as if there might be serious re-

sistance not far from here . . . . You can rest assured that the Army of the Potomac will retain its good reputation. The troops are not all up yet, but we are moving forward as rapidly as possible. I directed Franklin to cross the river and as soon as he could supply himself with the necessary articles of clothing, which he was unable to get at Hagerstown, to push forward. We are still too weak in cavalry, but I shall do the best in my power with what I have got . . . ."

On November 5th, 1862, by order of the Secretary of War, General Orders No. 182, were issued which were as follows:

"By direction of the President of the United States, it is ordered that Major General McClellan be relieved from the command of the Army of the Potomac, and that Major General Burnside take command of that army."

On the same date General Halleck wrote to General McClellan as follows: "On receipt of the order of the President, sent herewith, you will immediately turn over your command to Major General Burnside, and repair to Trenton, N. J., reporting, on your arrival at that place, by telegraph, for further orders."

Thus ended the military career of Major General George B. McClellan. The prediction of General Pope regarding him was early verified, and, save for his subsequent candidacy, as the opponent of the martyred Lincoln for the office of President of the United States, on a rebel platform, — a fitting climax to his career — he thenceforth passes into obscurity.

In transcribing this record, it is difficult to choose fitting language, or restrain the pen from giving correct expression to the sense of contemptuous indignation which the recital of that record suggests.

Why General McClellan was so long retained in command of the Army of the Potomac; or, how the patient

and forgiving Lincoln, after so many manifestations of his utter unfitness for the position, could have borne so long with his treasonable conduct, is one of the mysteries of those times which will perhaps never be revealed. It may perhaps be said that, after the lapse of so many years, it would be best, and charitable, to pass over his record in silence. Such course is mistaken charity.

It would be an outrage upon those whom he had so heartlessly and irretrievably wronged, to prolong that silence, under which, during those long years, their memories have been unjustly clouded. It would be unwise and unjust to the present and future generations, as well as unpatriotic, to suppress the facts of history, and reward by silence, actions, which should serve as admonitions to those who follow, that, however skillfully concealed, the evil deeds of men do follow them.

And why, should silence be maintained, or language guarded in relating the history of that period? That he was an artistic liar, his own reports attest; that he was either a consummate coward, or at heart a traitor, his countrymen will decide, and their unbiased verdict will doubtless be that he was both.

For the truth of history, and in justice to the memory of one of the most loyal and staunch supporters of the Government, and yet perhaps the most vilified and worst abused man of those dark and trying days, it will be fitting to close this record with a confidential letter dated at Washington, May 18, 1862, written by Secretary Stanton, and addressed to Rev. Heman Dyer. It was as follows: "Private and confidential.

Rev. Heman Dyer:

My dear Friend: Yours of the 16th, is welcomed as an evidence of the continued regard of one whose esteem I have always been anxious to possess. I have been very well aware of the calumnies busily circulated against me

in New York and elsewhere respecting my relations to General McClellan, but am compelled, from public considerations, to withhold the proofs that would stamp the falsehood of the accusations and the base motives of the accusers, who belong to two classes.

1st. Plunderers, who have been driven from the Department, where they were gorging millions.

2d. Scheming politicians, whose designs are endangered by an earnest, resolute, uncompromising prosecution of this war, as a war against rebels and traitors.

A brief statement of facts—an official record—which I can make to you confidentially, will be sufficient to satisfy yourself that your confidence in me has not been misplaced.

1. When I entered the Cabinet I was, and for months had been, the sincere and devoted friend of General McClellan, and to support him, and, so far as I might, aid and assist him in bringing the war to a close, was a chief inducement for me to sacrifice my personal happiness to a sense of public duty.

I had studied him earnestly, with an anxious desire to discover the military and patriotic virtue that might save the country; and if in any degree disappointed, I hoped on, and waited for time to develop.

I went into the Cabinet about the 20th of January. On the 27th, the President made his War Order No. 1, requiring the Army of the Potomac *to move*. It is not necessary, or perhaps proper, to state all the causes that led to that order, but it is enough to know that the Government was on the verge of bankruptcy, and, at the rate of expenditure, the armies must move or the Government perish.

The 22d of February was the day fixed for the movement, and when it arrived there was no more sign of movement on the Potomac than there had been for three months before. Many, very many, earnest conversations

I had held with General McClellan, to impress him with the absolute necessity of active operations, or that the Government would fail because of foreign intervention and enormous debt.

Between the 22d of February and the 8th of March, the President had again interfered, and a movement on Winchester and to clear the blockade of the Potomac was promised, commenced, and abandoned. The circumstances cannot at present be revealed.

On the 6th of March the President again interfered, ordered the Army of the Potomac to be organized into army corps, and that operations should commence immediately.

Two lines of operations were open. First. One moving directly on the enemy by Manassas, and forcing him back on Richmond, beating and destroying him by superior force, and all the time keeping the Capital secure by being between it and the enemy. This was the plan favored by the President. Second. The other plan was to transfer the troops by water to some point on the Lower Chesapeake, and thence advance on Richmond. This was General McClellan's plan.

The President reluctantly yielded his own views, although they were supported by some of the best military men in the country, and consented that the general should pursue his own plan. But, by a written order, he imposed the *special condition* that the army should not be moved without leaving a sufficient force in and around Washington to make the Capital *perfectly secure* against all danger, and that the force required should be determined by the judgment of all the commanders of army corps.

In order to enable General McClellan to devote his whole energy to the movement of his own army (which was quite enough to tax the ability of the ablest com-



mander in the world), he was relieved from the charge of the other military departments, it being supposed that their respective commanders were competent to direct the operations in their own departments. To enable General McClellan to transport his force, every means and power of the Government was placed at his disposal and unsparingly used.

When a large part of his force had been transferred to Fortress Monroe, and the whole of it about to go in a few days, information was given to me by various persons that there was great reason to fear that no adequate force had been left to defend the Capital in case of a sudden attack; that the enemy might detach a large force, and seize it at a time when it would be impossible for General McClellan to render any assistance.

Serious alarm was expressed by many persons, and many warnings given me, which I could not neglect. I ordered a report of the force left to defend Washington. It was reported by the commander to be less than 20,000 raw recruits, with not a single organized brigade! A dash, like that made a short time before at Winchester, would at any time take the Capital of the nation. The report of the force left to defend Washington, and the order of the President, were referred to Major General Hitchcock and Adjutant General Thomas to report—

1st. Whether the President's orders had been complied with.

2d. Whether the force left to defend the city was sufficient.

They reported in the negative on both points. These reports were submitted to the President, who also consulted General Totten, General Taylor, General Meigs, and General Ripley. They agreed in opinion that the Capital *was not safe*.

The President then, by written order, directed me to

retain one of the *army corps* for the defense of Washington, either Sumner's or McDowell's. As part of Sumner's Corps had already embarked, I directed McDowell to remain with his command, and the reasons were approved by the President.

Down to this period there had never been a shadow of difference between General McClellan and myself. It is true that I thought his plan of operations objectionable, as the most expensive, the most hazardous, and most protracted that could have been chosen, but I was not a military man, and, while he was in command, I would not interfere with his plan, and gave him every aid to execute it. But when the case assumed the form it had done by his disregard of the President's order, and by leaving the Capital exposed to seizure by the enemy, I was bound to act, even if I had not been required by the specific written order of the President. Will any man question that such was my duty?

When this order was communicated to General McClellan, it of course provoked his wrath, and the wrath of his friends was directed upon me because I was the agent of its execution. If the force had gone forward, as he had designed, I believe that Washington would this day be in the hands of the rebels.

Down to this point, moreover, there was never the slightest difference between the President and myself. But the entreaties of General McClellan induced the President to modify his order to the extent that Franklin's division (being part of McDowell's Corps that had been retained) was detached and sent forward by boat to McClellan. This was against my judgment, because I thought the whole force of McDowell should be kept together and sent forward by land on the shortest route to Richmond, thus aiding McClellan, but at the same time

covering and protecting Washington by keeping between it and the enemy.

In this opinion Major General Hitchcock, General Meigs and Adjutant General Thomas agreed. But the President was so anxious that General McClellan should have no cause of complaint, that he ordered the force to be sent by water, although that route was then threatened by the Merrimac. I yielded my opinion to the President's order; but between him and me there has never been the slightest shadow since I entered the Cabinet. And excepting the retention of the force under McDowell by the President's order, for the reasons mentioned, General McClellan had never made a request or expressed a wish that had not been promptly complied with, if in the power of the Government. To me personally he has repeatedly expressed his confidence and his thanks in the dispatches sent me.

Now, one word as to political motives. What motive can I have to thwart General McClellan? I am not now, never have been, and never will be a candidate for any office. I hold my present post at the request of a President who knew me personally, but to whom I had not spoken from the 4th of March, 1861, until the day he handed me my commission.

I knew that everything I cherished and held dear would be sacrificed by accepting office. But I thought I might help to save the country, and for that I was willing to perish. If I wanted to be a politician or a candidate for any office, would I stand between the Treasury and the robbers that are howling around me? Would I provoke and stand against the whole newspaper gang in this country, of every party, who, to *sell news*, would imperil a battle? I was never taken for a fool, but there could be no greater madness than for a man to encounter what I do for anything else than motives that overleap time and

look forward to eternity. I believe that God Almighty founded this Government, and for my acts in the effort to maintain it I expect to stand before Him in judgment.

You will pardon this long explanation, which has been made to no one else. It is due to you, who was my friend when I was a poor boy at school, and had no claim upon your confidence or kindness. It cannot be made public for obvious reasons. General McClellan is at the head of our chief army; he must have every confidence and support; and I am willing that the whole world should revile me rather than diminish one grain of the strength needed to conquer the rebels.

In a struggle like this, justice or credit to individuals is but dust in the balance. Desiring no office nor honor, and anxious only for the peace and quiet of my home, I suffer no inconvenience beyond that which arises from the trouble and anxiety suffered by worthy friends like yourself, who are naturally disturbed by the clamors and calumny of those whose interest or feeling is hostile to me.

The official records will, at the proper time, fully prove—

1st. That I have employed the whole power of the Government unsparingly to support General McClellan's operations in preference to every other general.

2d. That I have not interfered with or thwarted them in any particular.

3d. That the force retained from his expedition was not needed, and could not have been employed by him; that it was retained by express orders of the President, upon military investigation, and upon the best military advice in the country; that its retention was required to save the Capital from the danger to which it was exposed by a disregard of the President's positive order of the 6th of March.

4th. That between the President and myself there has never been any, the slightest, shadow of difference upon any point, save the detachment of Franklin's force, and that was a point of no significance, but in which I was sustained by Generals Hitchcock, Meigs, Thomas and Ripley, while the President yielded only to an anxious desire to avoid complaint, declaring at the same time his belief that the force was not needed by General McClellan.

You will, of course, regard this explanation as being in the strictest confidence, designed only for your information upon matters wherein you express concern for me.

The confidence of yourself, and men like you, is more than a full equivalent for all the railing that has been or can be expressed against me, and in the magnitude of the cause all merely individual questions are swallowed up. truly yours."

I shall always rejoice to hear from you, and am, as ever.

Edwin M. Stanton.

## CHAPTER XVI

### GENERAL BURNSIDE'S CAMPAIGN ON THE RAPPAHANNOCK

General Halleck notifies Burnside of his appointment and orders him to report position of his troops and what he purposes doing with them—Burnside accepts the command and promises to report his plans—Issues an address to the army—Reports his plan of campaign—Requires provision and pontoon trains to be started to him at once—He proposes by a quick movement to march upon Richmond via Fredericksburg—Declares he accepts command only in obedience to orders—Awaits the approval of his plans—The President assigns Gen. Hooker to command of Porter's Corps—Porter ordered to report to Adjutant General—The President assents to Burnside's plans—Burnside organizes the army in three grand divisions—His movement begun—Position of troops—Sumner gains commanding position opposite Fredericksburg—Army awaits the arrival of pontoons—Inquiries regarding them—One train to start soon, Halleck not inclined to send another—Burnside reminds him of necessity of promptness in executing his plans—His purpose to cross the river before the enemy could concentrate—The delay of pontoons permits the rebels to concentrate in large force—Halleck's equivocation—His persistent avoidance of responsibility and negative service—Burnside's plans frustrated—The pontoons arrive.

**O**N the 5th day of November, 1862, at the same time that McClellan was relieved of the command of the Army of the Potomac, General Halleck notified General Burnside of his appointment thereto accompanied by the following order:

“General: Immediately on assuming command of the Army of the Potomac, you will report the position of your troops, and what you purpose doing with them.”

In response to this order, General Burnside, on the 8th, replied:

“I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th of November, covering General Orders No. 182, upon the receipt of which I called upon General

McClellan, who received from General Buckingham a copy of the order, and at once turned over the command of the Army of the Potomac to me.

General McClellan had already given directions covering some two or three days, and during that time I will try to acquaint myself with the condition of his several staff departments, after which I will, as you request, give you a full statement of my plans."

On November 9th General Burnside issued his General Orders No. 1, assuming his command, as follows:

"In accordance with General Orders No. 182, issued by the President of the United States, I hereby assume command of the Army of the Potomac.

Patriotism and the exercise of my every energy in the direction of this army, aided by the full and hearty co-operation of its officers and men, will, I hope, under the blessing of God, insure its success.

Having been a sharer of the privations and a witness of the bravery of the old Army of the Potomac in the Maryland Campaign, and fully identified with them in their feeling of respect and esteem for General McClellan, entertained through a long and most friendly association with him, I feel that it is not as a stranger that I assume their command.

To the Ninth Corps, so long and intimately associated with me, I need say nothing; our histories are identical.

With diffidence for myself, but with a proud confidence in the unswerving loyalty and determination of the gallant army now intrusted to my care, I accept its control, with the steadfast assurance that the just cause must prevail."

On the same date, in compliance with the directions of General Halleck, he forwarded from Warrenton, Va., the report of his proposed plan of operations which was as follows: "In accordance with the order of the General-



*A. B. Burrows*





in-Chief of the 5th instant, I have the honor to make the following report of the movements proposed for this army.

To concentrate all the forces near this place, and impress upon the enemy a belief that we are to attack Culpeper or Gordonsville, and at the same time accumulate four or five days' supply for the men and animals; then make a rapid move of the whole force to Fredericksburg, with a view to a movement upon Richmond from that point. The following are my reasons for deciding upon this plan:

If we move upon Culpeper and Gordonsville, a fight there and a general engagement, even with results in our favor, the enemy will have many lines of retreat for his defeated army, and will, in all likelihood, be able to reach Richmond with enough of his force to render it necessary to fight another battle at that place; and should he leave even one corps, with cavalry, on our right flank, it would render the pursuit very precarious, owing to the great lack of supplies in this country, and the liability to interruption of our communication with Washington.

Should the enemy retreat in the direction of Richmond upon our approach to Culpeper and Gordonsville, we would simply follow a retreating army, well supplied with provisions, at least, at depots in his rear, whilst this army would have to rely upon a long line of communication for its supplies, and, as in the other case, a small portion of the enemy's force on our flank might tend to interrupt our communications.

It may be well to add here, while on the subject of interrupted communication, that the enemy's sources for gaining information are far superior to our own. The General-in-Chief will readily understand the reason.

The difference is more than usual in their favor at

present, from the fact that nearly all the negroes are being run South and kept under strict guard.

Should the enemy retreat before us in the direction of Staunton and Lynchburg, the same difficulty would follow, with the certainty that he would also have a small portion of his force on our left flank. In moving by way of Fredericksburg there is no point up to the time when we should reach that place at which we will not be nearer to Washington than the enemy, and we will all the time be on the shortest route to Richmond, the taking of which, I think, should be the great object of the campaign, as the fall of that place would tend more to cripple the rebel cause than almost any other military event, except the absolute breaking up of their army.

The presence of a large army on the Fredericksburg line would render it almost impossible for the enemy to make a successful move upon Washington by any road on this side of the Potomac, and I take it that there are forces enough at Washington and on the line of the Potomac, connected with the fortifications about Washington, to repulse any movement of the enemy on the Capitol, by way of the Upper Potomac; and it is hardly probable that he would attempt any serious invasion of Pennsylvania at this season of the year, and even if he should make a lodgement in that State of any force that he can spare, the destruction of that force would be the result very soon after winter set in, and the destruction of property by him would be small in comparison with the other expenses of the war.

Could the army before Richmond be beaten, and their Capital taken, the loss of half a dozen of our towns and cities in the interior of Pennsylvania could well be afforded. A movement of the enemy upon Baltimore I consider altogether improbable, as an attack upon that place would render the destruction of the city certain.

In connection with this movement in the direction of Fredericksburg, I would suggest that at least thirty canal boats and barges be at once loaded with commissary stores and forage, and be towed to the neighborhood of Aquia Creek, from which place they can be brought into Belle Plain after the arrival of our force in that vicinity.

These should be followed at once by enough stores and forage to subsist the army for thirty days. A great portion of this, I think, could be towed up the Rappahannock, under convoy of light-draught gunboats; but that is a matter for after consideration. It will also be necessary to start at once from Washington or Alexandria, by way of Dumfries, a quantity of beef cattle, and all the wagon trains that can be spared, filled with small rations, such as bread, salt, coffee, sugar, soap and candles.

This train should be preceded by pontoon trains enough to span the Rappahannock with two tracks; but a small escort of cavalry for this train would be necessary, as we would be all the time between the enemy and the train. I will, however, if notified of its departure by telegraph, see that it is protected by my cavalry. . . .

Below Fredericksburg, between the Rappahannock and the Potomac, there must be quite an amount of forage, which could be used by our broken down animals after we reach Fredericksburg. We will need some fresh horses and mules on our arrival, which can be driven direct from Washington on this side of the Potomac, or from Baltimore direct to Smiths Point, opposite Aquia Creek, from which place they can be brought over in Ferry boats, several of which it would be advisable to send to us. An abundance of horses can also be brought by light-draught vessels from New York and Philadelphia to a point near Belle Plain, where they can be thrown overboard and swim ashore.

I cannot impress too strongly upon the General-in-

Chief the necessity of furnishing by all these means an abundant supply of horses and mules and beef cattle. These should be sent to Fredericksburg, even at the risk of arriving after we leave.

After reaching Fredericksburg, our wagon trains can be organized and filled with at least twelve days' provisions; when a rapid movement can be made direct upon Richmond, by way of such roads as are open to us, and as soon as the army arrives in front of the place an attack should be made at once, with a strong hope of success. The detail of the movement from Fredericksburg I will give you hereafter.

A great reason for feeling that the Fredericksburg route is the best, is that if we are detained by the elements, it would be much better for us to be on that route. I hope the General-in-Chief will impress upon the Secretary of War the necessity for sanctioning the changes which I now propose to make in this army.

1st. To divide it into three parts—right wing, left wing, and center under command of the three ranking generals present.

2d. To do away with the very massive and elaborate adjutant-general's office at these headquarters, and require the different commanders of these wings and corps to correspond directly with Washington in reference to all such things as resignations, leaves of absence, discharges, recruiting service, etc., about which they necessarily know more than I do. I would have to be governed by their suggestions, at any rate, and the attention to these matters in detail would surround me with a large number of additional staff officials, and embarrass me with a responsibility which I cannot assume.

With an approval of these suggestions, I will endeavor with all my ability to bring this campaign to a successful issue. If they are not approved, I hope specific

instructions will be given, and the General-in-Chief may rely upon a cheerful and implicit obedience.

The General-in-Chief will readily comprehend the embarrassments which surround me in taking command of this army, at this place, and at this season of the year. Had I been asked to take it, I should have declined; but being ordered, I cheerfully obey.

A telegram from you, approving of my plans, will put us to work at once."

On November 10th, by direction of the President, Maj. Gen. J. Hooker, U. S. Volunteers, was assigned to the command of the Fifth Army Corps, in place of Maj. Gen. Fitz John Porter, who was ordered to report immediately to the Adjutant General of the Army in Washington.

On the 14th, in answer to an inquiry from General Burnside, General Halleck telegraphed him as follows:

"The President has just assented to your plan. He thinks that it will succeed, if you move very rapidly; otherwise not. See General Wright's telegram in relation to the movement of Jackson on Romney and Cumberland."

The telegram General Halleck alludes to was dated at Cincinnati, Ohio, Nov. 12th, and was as follows:

"General Cox telegraphs that information has been received from General Kelley, dated yesterday, that Jackson, with 40,000 men, had returned to Winchester, and was moving northward, by way of Romney and Cumberland, and that 135 cavalry passed through Bloomery Gap the day before. This comes to General Kelley from Lieutenant Colonel Moss. . . .

In accordance with the proposed plans of General Burnside, which had received the President's approval, on the 14th, he issued the following General Orders reorganizing the army:

“1. The organization of a portion of this army in three grand divisions is hereby announced.

These grand divisions will be formed and commanded as follows:

The Second and Ninth Corps will form the right grand division, and will be commanded by Maj. Gen. E. V. Sumner.

The First and Sixth Corps will form the left grand division, and will be commanded by Maj. Gen. W. B. Franklin.

The Third and Fifth Corps will form the center grand division, and will be commanded by Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker.

The Eleventh Corps, with such other troops as may hereafter be assigned to it, will constitute a reserve force, under the command of Maj. Gen. F. Sigel.

Assignments of cavalry and further details will be announced in future orders.

II. In accordance with instructions from the War Department, the commanders of these grand divisions will have power to decide such questions relating to the interior management of their commands as are now forwarded to these headquarters for final action. ”

November 19th, General Burnside made the following report to General Halleck: “I have the honor to report that on the receipt of the telegram of the General-in-Chief, informing me that the President approved of the plan of operations on this line, arrangements for a move were commenced by drawing in the extreme right to the neighborhood of Warrenton, and, as soon as the whole command was supplied with three or four days’ commissary stores and a day or two of forage, the column was moved.

General Sumner, with his two corps, took the road to

Falmouth, arriving there with his advance on the night of the 17th.

General Franklin, with his two corps, took the road to Stafford Court House, arriving there last night, and General Hooker, with his two corps, and Stoneman's and Whipple's divisions, brought up the rear on all the roads, and arrived at his designated place, within 6 miles of here (Falmouth) opposite the United States Ford, to-day.

Pleasanton's and Bayard's Cavalry are just beyond Hooker, at Deep Run, picketing all the fords of the Rapahannock, and Averell is at Spotted Tavern, picketing the roads in the direction of Catlett's, Brentsville, and Dumfries. I shall make different arrangements for the cavalry to-morrow, which will be reported to you, as so strong a force is not needed in that direction.

On the approach of General Sumner to Falmouth, a battery on the opposite side of the town opened upon him, doing but little damage, and was soon silenced by Captain Pettit's battery of 10-pounder Parrott guns. General Sumner's two corps now occupy all the commanding positions opposite Fredericksburg, with a battery commanding the railroad for 2 miles after leaving the city, which has the effect to stop the trains that were carrying off the grain and flour from this place.

The pontoon trains have not yet arrived, and an examination of the ford here to-day demonstrated that the infantry and artillery cannot pass. By keeping the horses well separated, the cavalry can cross over. I have ordered a reconnaissance to-morrow morning at daylight of the United States Ford, when I hope to be able to cross some cavalry and infantry, with some light pieces of artillery. As soon as the pontoon trains arrive, the bridge will be built and the command moved over.

The enemy do not seem to be in force on the opposite side, but their pickets extend down to the river. I learn



that supplies are being landed with considerable rapidity at Belle Plain and Aquia Creek, and I have directed the different commands to commence supplying themselves at once. . . . I trust the new horses and mules will be hurried along, as we have suffered very much by losses within the last few days. Many of the animals have been without forage for two or three days, as it has been impossible to procure it, the whole country through which we have passed having been completely devastated. I hope to receive an abundant supply at Belle Plain, and when we cross the river it is probable that corn can be found more abundant in that section. . . .

I will report to you from time to time our progress. The delay in the arrival of the pontoon bridge, with the necessary time it will take to get our supplies, will enable the General-in-Chief to visit this place for a day, which I should like very much, as I am very anxious to have a more full consultation than we had at Warrenton.

I omitted to mention in the body of the dispatch that General Pleasanton had some skirmishing in the rear, but his loss was trifling—2 killed and a few wounded. General Bayard lost 7 of his men, captured through the carelessness of an officer, who is now in arrest. All the wagons and public property have arrived."

The following dispatches will not be without interest at this time, as relating to subsequent events.

On November 14th, C. B. Comstock, Lieutenant of Engineers on General Burnside's Staff, telegraphed from Warrenton, to Captain Bowers, Adj. Gen. Engineer Brigade at Washington, as follows: "On November 6th Captain Spaulding was directed to move bridge material from Berlin to Washington, and mount at once one complete bridge train in Washington. Is that train ready to move, with horses, and everything needed supplied; if not, how long before it will be ready?"

Later on the same day he also sent the following telegram:

“In addition to the bridge train which Captain Spaulding has been previously directed to fit out in Washington, General Burnside desires to have one more complete train mounted and horsed as soon as possible, and, with the other, sent with a company, at least, and Captain Spaulding in command, by land to Fredericksburg, Va.

. . . Please advise me how long before they will be ready, and on their starting advise me of that.”

The same date, in reply to these two dispatches, General D. P. Woodbury telegraphed him as follows:

“I have received your two telegrams to-day. Captain Spaulding has arrived. Thirty-six pontoons have arrived. Forty more are expected in the morning. Captain Spaulding received Captain Duane’s order of the 6th, on the afternoon of the 12th. One pontoon train can be got ready to start Sunday morning or Monday morning, depending somewhat upon the Quartermaster’s Department. General Halleck is not inclined to send another train by land, but will allow it, probably, if General Burnside insists. A second train can be sent by water to Aquia Creek, and from thence transported by the teams which carry the first.”

November 22d, General Burnside made the following report to General Halleck, through his Chief of Staff:

“By reference to my plan of operations, submitted by order of the Commander-in-Chief, it will be found that one of the necessary parts of that plan was to have started from Washington at once pontoon trains sufficient to span the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg twice; and I was assured that at least one train would leave as soon as the General-in-Chief and General Meigs returned; and I proposed that if an escort was required, and I was

informed of the departure of the train by telegraph, I would furnish it from my cavalry.

Receiving no information of its departure I ordered Lieutenant Comstock to telegraph in reference to it. It is very clear that my object was to make the move to Fredericksburg very rapidly, and to throw a heavy force across the river before the enemy could concentrate a force to oppose the crossing, and supposed the pontoon train would arrive at this place nearly simultaneously with the head of the column. Had that been the case, the whole of General Sumner's column—33,000 strong—would have crossed into Fredericksburg at once over a pontoon bridge, in front of a city filled with families of rebel officers and sympathizers with the rebel cause, and garrisoned by a small squandron of cavalry and a battery of artillery which General Sumner silenced within an hour after his arrival.

Had the pontoon bridge arrived even on the 19th or 20th, the army could have crossed with trifling opposition. But now the opposite side of the river is occupied by a large rebel force under General Longstreet, with batteries ready to be placed in position to operate against the working parties building the bridge and the troops in crossing.

The pontoon train has not yet arrived, and the river is too high for the troops to cross at any of the fords.

You can readily see that much delay may occur in the general movement, and I deem it my duty to lay these facts before you, and to say that I cannot make the promise of probable success with the faith that I did when I supposed that all parts of the plan would be carried out.

Another very material part of the proposition, which I understand to be approved as a whole, was that all the surplus wagons that were in Washington were to be loaded with bread and small commissary stores and sent

to this place at once, which would probably have supplied our army with from five to ten days' provisions.

These trains could have moved with perfect safety, as they would have been protected by the movements of this army. I do not recall these facts in any captious spirit, but simply to impress upon the General-in-Chief that he cannot expect me to do as much as if all the parts of the plan had been carried out. In fact, a force can be arrayed against us at this place that would very materially retard us. The work of the quartermaster's and commissary departments at Aquia Creek, or Belle Plain, has been most completely accomplished, and I am not prepared to say that every effort has not been made to carry out the other parts of the plan; but I must, in honesty and candor, say that I cannot feel that the move indicated in my plan of operations will be successful after two very important parts of the plan have not been carried out, no matter for what reason.

The President said that the movement, in order to be successful, must be made quickly, and I thought the same."

General Halleck, subsequently, in his report, in referring to Burnside's movements, in relating his interview with him at Warrenton on Nov. 12th, says: "General Burnside proposed to move down the north side of the Rappahannock to Falmouth, and establish a new base of supplies at Aquia Creek or Belle Plain. This proposed change of base was not approved by me. . . . I strongly urged him to retain his present base and continue his march toward Richmond in the manner pointed out in the President's letter of October 13th to General McClellan.

General Burnside did not fully concur in the President's views, but finally consented to so modify his plan as to cross the army by the fords of the Upper Rappahan-

noek and then move down and seize the heights south of Fredericksburg. . . . I, however, refused to give any official approval of this deviation from the President's instructions until his assent was obtained. . . .

On its receiving his assent, rather than approval, I telegraphed on the 14th authority to General Burnside to adopt it. . . ."

Further in General Halleek's report he says: "It has been inferred from the testimony of General Burnside before the Congressional Committee on the conduct of the war that his plan of marching the whole army on the north of the Rappahannock, from Warrenton to Falmouth, had been approved by the authorities in Washington, and that he expected, on his arrival there, to find supplies and pontoons, with gunboats to cover his crossings.

That plan was never approved, nor was he ever authorized to adopt it. . . . He could not possibly have expected supplies and pontoons to be landed at points then occupied in force by the enemy."

General Halleek appears somewhat contradictory and disingenuous in his statements. When General Burnside was notified of his appointment as commander of the Army of the Potomac, he was at the same time peremptorily ordered to submit a plan of his proposed operations. This he did at considerable length and in detail, stating fully precisely what he proposed doing, and his reasons therefor. He complied with the orders which he had received, and distinctly asked that in case his plans were not approved, that specific directions should be given to him, which directions he would cheerfully obey.

The plans which were thus submitted certainly were approved and authorized, or their execution would never have been attempted. Yet, General Halleek states, both that those plans were and were not, approved or authorized.

There can be no mistaking of Burnside's intended purpose as outlined in his written plan; he certainly did expect to find that pontoons and supplies had been provided for him, for the delivery of which he had given very particular and specific directions.

No mention was made of gunboats, and inasmuch as he had contemplated meeting the train with a cavalry escort, it is difficult to conceive how an overland journey could suggest the idea of the use of gunboats. It is noticeable in all of General Halleck's dispatches and correspondence he studiously avoids assuming any responsibility whatever in the movements or actions of the army. Although General-in-Chief of the armies, and ostensibly the directing head of all military movements, yet, not a single instance appears where he ever issued a direct, determined, and positive command in the direction, or for the execution of any movement, even when solicited to do so.

Apparently he conceived his official functions to be those of criticising, rather than of directing, and it is not unnatural for one to wonder and ask, of what practical benefit or advantage was his military knowledge and skill to the Government, in the direction or execution of military movements. Under all the circumstances, it certainly appears strange that General Halleck, as the General-in-Chief and military adviser of the Government, if he did not, as he asserts, approve of General Burnside's plans, and had a conscientious regard for the performance of his duty, then and there assert his powers and prerogatives, by directing otherwise; and it is not surprising that the President, in choosing between the opinions of a non-committal official figure head who refused, or lacked the courage to assume any responsibility, and those of an active general in the field possessed of well grounded

opinions and the courage of his convictions, should accept the latter.

At this distance of time, the plans submitted by General Burnside appeared to have been wisely conceived and expeditiously executed, and had his reasonable expectations of the prompt arrival of pontoons been realized, there can be no reasonable doubt but that his movement would have proven a brilliant success.

The pontoons did not arrive at Falmouth until Nov. 25th.

## CHAPTER XVII

Burnside orders an advance—The enemy's concentration compels modification of his plans—Fredericksburg occupied by Burnside—A difficult feat—Positions of the troops and topography of Fredericksburg—Burnside's orders to his troops—Strength of his forces—Battle of Fredericksburg—The objective point—His orders to Franklin—Franklin's apathy and inactivity—Gen. Meade's heroism—Hooker ordered to attack—Franklin's disobedience—Failure of the movement—The army recrosses the river—Reasons for withdrawal—The President issues congratulatory address to the army—He approves of Burnside's efforts—Burnside begins another forward movement—The President halts it—Burnside visits the President—His movements thwarted by some of his generals—Gen. Meig's letter to Burnside—He reviews the condition of affairs—Exhaustion of the country perilous—His friendly advice and suggestions—Encourages him to be aggressive.

**D** ECEMBER 9th General Burnside telegraphed to General Halleck's Chief of Staff as follows:

“All the orders have been issued to the several commanders of grand divisions and heads of departments for an attempt to cross the river on Thursday morning. The plans of the movement are somewhat modified by the movements of the enemy, who have been concentrating in large force opposite the point at which we originally intended to cross.

I think now that the enemy will be more surprised by a crossing immediately in our front than in any other part of the river. The commanders of grand divisions coincide with me in this opinion, and I have accordingly ordered the movement, which will enable us to keep the force well concentrated, at the same time covering our communications in the rear.

I am convinced that a large force of the enemy is now concentrated in the vicinity of Port Royal, its left resting



near Fredericksburg, which we hope to turn. We have an abundance of artillery, and have made very elaborate preparations to protect the crossings.

The importance of the movement and the details of the plan seem to be well understood by the grand division commanders, and we hope to succeed.

If the General-in-Chief desires it, I will send a minute statement by telegraph in cipher to-morrow morning. The movement is so important that I feel anxious to be fortified by his approval."

On the 10th General Halleck telegraphed: "I beg of you not to telegraph details of your plans, nor the times of your intended movements. No secret can be kept which passes through so many hands."

Dec. 11th General Burnside telegraphed General Halleck: "Our troops now occupy Fredericksburg. We have three bridges opposite the town and two below, with a force on the opposite bank covering them. I expect to cross the rest of my command to-morrow."

On the 12th he again telegraphed: "Our forces are crossing the river, and thus far without opposition."

The following extracts from the final report of General Burnside, as made to the Adjutant General of the Army, will explain the subsequent events: "No more difficult feat has been performed during the war than the throwing of these bridges in the face of the enemy by these brave men; and I take pleasure in referring to the reports of General Woodbury and Lieutenant Comstock.

During this day, the 12th, Sumner's and Franklin's commands crossed over and took position on the south bank, and General Hooker's grand division was held in readiness to support either the right or left, or to press the enemy in case the other command succeeded in moving him.

The plain below the town is interrupted by hedges and

ditches to a considerable extent, which gives good covering to an enemy, making it difficult to manoeuvre upon. The old Richmond road runs from the town in a line nearly parallel with the river, to a point near the Massaponax, where it turns to the south, and passes near the right of the crest, or ridge, which runs in rear of the town, and was then occupied by the enemy in force. In order to pass down this road it was necessary to occupy the extreme right of this crest, which was designated on the map then in use by the army as "Hamilton's."

By the night of the 12th the troops were all in position, and I visited the different commands with a view to determining as to future movements. The delay in laying the bridges had rendered some change in the plan of attack necessary, and the orders already issued were to be superseded by new ones. It was after midnight when I returned from visiting the different commands, and before daylight of the 13th I prepared the following orders:

Maj. Gen. E. V Sumner: The general commanding directs that you extend the left of your command to Deep Run, connecting with General Franklin, extending your right as far as your judgment may dictate. He also directs that you push a column of a division or more along the Plank and Telegraph roads, with a view to seizing the heights in rear of the town. The latter movement should be well covered by skirmishers, and supported so as to keep its line of retreat open. Copy of instructions given to General Franklin will be sent to you very soon. You will please await them at your present headquarters, where he (the general commanding) will meet you. Great care should be taken to prevent a collision of our own forces during the fog. The watchword for the day will be "Scott." The column for a movement up the Telegraph and Plank roads will be got in readiness to move,

but will not move till the general commanding communicates with you."

Maj. Gen. Franklin: General Hardie will carry this dispatch to you, and remain with you during the day. The general commanding directs that you keep your whole command in position for a rapid movement down the old Richmond road, and you will send out at once a division at least to pass below Smithfield, to seize, if possible, the height near Captain Hamilton's, on this side of the Massaponax, taking care to keep it well supported and its line of retreat open. He has ordered another column of a division or more to be moved from General Sumner's command up the Plank road to its intersection with the Telegraph road, where they will divide, with a view to seizing the heights on both of these roads. Holding these two heights, with the heights near Captain Hamilton's, will, he hopes, compel the enemy to evacuate the whole ridge between these points. . . . You will keep your whole command in readiness to move at once, as soon as the fog lifts. . . ."

The forces now under command of General Franklin consisted of about 60,000 men. . . . General Sumner had about 27,000 men. . . . General Hooker's command was about 26,000 strong, two of General Stoneman's divisions having reported to General Franklin. . . . Positive information had reached me that the enemy had built a new road in rear of the ridge or crest, from near Hamilton's to the Telegraph road, along which road they communicated from one part of their line to the other. I decided to seize, if possible, a point on this road near Hamilton's, which would not divide the enemy's forces by breaking their line, but would place our forces in position to enable us to move in rear of the crest, and either force its evacuation or the capitulation of the forces occupying it.

It was my intention, in case this point had been gained, to push Generals Sumner and Hooker against the left of the crest, and prevent at least the removal of the artillery of the enemy in case they attempt a retreat. The above orders were prepared in accordance with these views.

It will be seen that General Franklin was directed to seize, if possible, the heights near Captain Hamilton's, and to send at once a column of attack for that purpose, composed of a division at least, . . . and to keep his whole command in readiness to move down the old Richmond road. The object of this order is clear. . . . He was ordered to seize these heights, if possible, and to do it at once. . . . I directed General Sumner's column not to move until he received orders from me, while General Franklin was ordered to move at once. . . . At 10.30 a. m. I sent Capt. Lydig of my staff to General Franklin, to ascertain the condition of affairs in his front as I was anxiously expecting to hear that the hill near Hamilton's had been carried. Captain Lydig's written statement is as follows: "I found General Franklin in a grove of trees, in the center of his command, and, on delivering the message, I was informed by him that Meade was very hotly engaged, and that his men were by that time pretty generally engaged. He also added I think, that Birney had orders to support them. I then inquired if any of General Smith's corps were engaged, and was told that they were not. . . . It was about 12.30 o'clock when I arrived with my report at headquarters."

I next sent Captain Cutts with an order to General Franklin to advance his right and front. Captain Cutts states in his note book that he carried the order to General Franklin, and the General said to him that it was impossible to advance. . . ."

I had before this sent to General Franklin an order, by

telegraph, directing him to make an attack upon the heights immediately in his front.

General Sumner's corps was held in position until 11 o'clock, in the hope that Franklin would make such an impression upon the enemy as would enable Sumner to carry the enemy's line near the Telegraph and Plank roads.

Feeling the importance of haste, I now directed General Sumner to commence his attack. . . . I supposed when I ordered General Sumner to attack that General Franklin's attack on the left would have been made before General Sumner's men would be engaged, and would have caused the enemy to weaken his forces in front of Sumner, and I therefore hoped to break through their lines at this point. It subsequently appeared that this attack had not been made at the time General Sumner moved, and, when it was finally made proved to be in such small force as to have had no permanent effect upon the enemy's line. . . . One of the smallest divisions of the command—General Meade's—led the attack. . . .

General Meade and his troops deserve great credit for the skill and heroism displayed on this occasion. Their brave efforts deserved better success which, doubtless, would have attended them had he been well supported.

At 1.30 p. m., I ordered General Hooker to support General Sumner with his command. Soon after receiving this order, he sent an aid-de-camp to me with the statement that he did not think the attack would be successful. I directed him to make the assault. Some time afterward General Hooker came to me in person with the same statement. I reiterated my order, which he then proceeded to obey.

The afternoon was now well advanced. General Franklin before this had been positively ordered to attack with his whole force, and I hoped before sundown to have

broken through the enemy's line. This order was not carried out. .

Our forces had been repulsed at all points, and it was necessary to look upon the day's work as a failure. It is not pleasant to dwell upon these results, even at this distance of time, and I have, therefore, been thus brief in my statement of them.

I directed preparations to be made for another attack on the morning of the 14th, but for reasons not necessary to mention here, I countermanded the order. On the night of the 15th, I decided to remove the army to the north side of the river, and the work was accomplished without loss of men or material. . .

At 4 o'clock on the morning of the 14th, General Burnside sent the following dispatch to the President: "I have just returned from the field. Our troops are all over the river. We hold the first ridge outside the town and 3 miles below. We hope to carry the crest to-day. Our loss is heavy—say, 5,000."

Dec. 15th, Burnside received the following dispatch from General Halleck: "I have seen your aide, Major Goddard. You will be fully sustained in any measures you may adopt in regard to unreliable officers. In regard to movements we cannot judge here; you are the best judge. Anything you may want will be supplied as soon as possible. General Dix will assist by diversions. We have every confidence in your judgment and ultimate success."

At 4 o'clock a. m. of the 16th, General Burnside telegraphed to General Halleck: "I have thought it necessary to withdraw the army to this side of the river, and the movement has progressed satisfactorily thus far."

On the same day, Chief Quartermaster Ingalls, sent the following telegram to General Meigs: "The army is withdrawn to the left bank of the Rappahannock. The

attempt to break the rebel lines opposite was terribly daring and bloody, but was not very successful. The army is safe, and I trust we can still move on, but the delay will afford opportunity to complete our equipment of trains. . . . ”

In response to General Burnside's notice of his withdrawal from Fredericksburg, he received the following dispatch from General Halleck: “The President desires that you report the reasons of your withdrawal as soon as possible.”

In answer to this dispatch, General Burnside made the following response: “Your dispatch is received. The army was withdrawn to this side of the river because I felt the positions in front could not be carried, and it was a military necessity either to attack or retire. A repulse would have been disastrous to us.

I hope this explanation will be satisfactory to the President. The army was withdrawn at night, without the knowledge of the enemy, and without loss either of property or men. I have sent Colonel Aspinwall to you this afternoon, who can give you full accounts of the affairs at the present moment. I will send you a more full dispatch to-morrow.”

December 22d, President Lincoln issued the following address:

“To the Army of the Potomac:

I have just read your commanding general's report of the battle of Fredericksburg. Although you were not successful, the attempt was not an error, nor the failure other than accident. The courage with which you, in open field, maintained the contest against an intrenched foe, and the consummate skill and success with which you crossed and recrossed the river, in the face of the enemy, show that you possess all the qualities of a great army,

which will yet give victory to the cause of the country and of popular government.

Condoling with the mourners for the dead, and sympathizing with the severely wounded, I congratulate you that the number of both is comparatively so small. I tender to you, officers and soldiers, the thanks of the nation."

General Burnside in his report thus says: "On December 17th, I made a report to General Halleck, . . . Preparations were at once commenced to refit the army, and I decided to make another movement against the enemy. On December 26, I ordered three days' cooked rations, with ten days' supply in the wagons, together with a supply of forage, beef cattle, ammunition, and other stores, and for the entire army to be ready to move at twelve hours notice.

It is not worth while to give the details of this intended movement. It will be enough to say that the cavalry had already started upon it, and the necessary orders were prepared for all the forces, when I received from the President a dispatch in the following words:

"I have good reasons for saying that you must not make a general movement without first letting me know of it."

I at once countermanded the order, and proceeded to Washington, and was told by the President, that some general officers of my command (W. B. Franklin and Wm. F. Smith) had represented to him that the army was not in condition to move, and he was induced by their statement to telegraph me as he did."

The following extracts, from a letter dated Dec. 30, 1862, written by General M. C. Meigs, and addressed to General Burnside, will not be without interest as showing the general condition of the country prevailing at this particular time. They are as follows:



"My dear General: You were good enough to say that you would be pleased to hear from me, and I venture to say a few words to you which neither the newspapers nor, I fear, anybody in your army is likely to utter.

In my position as Quartermaster General much is seen that is seen from no other stand point of the army.

The Secretary of the Treasury has always felt the pressure of the difficulty of providing means to carry on the war, but he has thus far succeeded, so that the credit of the Government has not much suffered. Our contracts for supplies have not been made at prices higher than the consumption of the material might justify. Contractors have been content to wait a few weeks or months for their pay, and to receive it in certificates of debt, instead of in Treasury notes or gold.

Hay and oats, two essentials for an army, have risen, however, until it is difficult to find men willing to undertake their delivery, and the prices are higher than ever before. A ton of hay costs not less than \$30, and a bushel of oats costs \$1.00 by the time it gets to Aquia.

I begin to fear that the supply will fail. Should this happen, your army would be obliged to retire, and the animals would be dispersed in search of food.

Every day's consumption of your army is an immense destruction of the natural and monetary resources of the country. The country begins to feel the effect of this exhaustion, and I begin to apprehend a catastrophe.

General Halleck tells me that you believe your numbers are greater than the enemy's, and yet the army waits! Some officers talk of having done enough; of going into winter quarters. This I do not understand to be your thought, but I am told that you probably find opinions different as to the possibility of any proposed movement.

In so great a matter, on which so much depends, there will be always difference of opinion. There are few men

who are capable of taking the responsibility of bringing on such a great conflict as a battle between two such armies as oppose each other at Fredericksburg. So long as you consult your principal officers together, the result will be that proverbial of councils of war.

Upon the commander, to whom all the glory of success will attach, must rest the responsibility of deciding the plan of campaign. Every day weakens your army; every good day lost is a golden opportunity in the career of our country—lost forever. Exhaustion steals over the country. Confidence and hope are dying. While I have been always sure that ultimate success must attend the cause of freedom, justice and government sustained by 18,000,000 against that of oppression, perjury, and treason supported by 5,000,000, I begin to doubt the possibility of maintaining the contest beyond this winter, unless the popular heart is encouraged by victory on the Rappahannock. . . . But what is needed is a great and overwhelming defeat and destruction of that army. Such a victory would be of incalculable value. It would place upon your head the wreath of immortal glory. It would place your name at the side of Washington. . . .

If by such a march as Napoleon made at Jena, as Lee made in his campaign against Pope, you throw your whole army upon his communications, interpose between him and Richmond, or even take a position to the southwest of the bulk of his army, and he fights, if you are successful, he has no retreat. His army would be dispersed, and the greater portion of it would throw down its arms. The artillery and baggage and camps would fall into your hands. The gain of the position would give the strategic victory. . . . There would be risk of course. No operation of war is without it. . . .

It seems to me that the army should move bodily up the Rappahannock, cross the river, aim for a point on the

railroad between the rebels and Richmond, and send forward cavalry and light troops to break up the road and intercept retreat. . . . The result would be with the God of battles, in whose keeping we believe our cause to rest. Will we ever have a better opportunity? . . .

To any plan you will find objections. Address yourself to the great work. Decide upon your plan and give your orders to each general to march by a certain road at a certain hour, and to expect that on his right or left such another will co-operate with him if he meets the enemy. Whatever advice they may give, you have no general in your army who will fail to march promptly on your order or to fight gallantly when brought face to face with the enemy.

The gallantry of the attack on Fredericksburg made amends for its ill success, and soldiers were not discouraged by it. . . . But the slumber of the army since is eating into the vitals of the nation. As day after day has gone, my heart has sunk, and I see greater peril to our nationality in the present condition of affairs than I have seen at any time during the struggle.

Forgive me if I have written freely and strongly. I cannot express as strongly as I feel our danger, and I know that you, as I hope myself, have only one object—the success of our cause and salvation of our country ”

## CHAPTER XVIII

Burnside's interview with the president—Some suppressed correspondence—The President's difficulties and burdens—Halleck will assume no responsibilities and renders negative assistance—Tenders his resignation as General-in-Chief—The resignation withdrawn—Burnside's letter to the President—Necessary that he should have men who will give him definite and honest opinions—Offers his resignation—Mutual co-operation and assistance wanting—Responsibilities resting on the President—Burnside's resignation not accepted and he returns to the army—His letters to Halleck and the President—Announces his final plans for a forward movement—Friction amongst his officers—Unwilling to remain inactive and tenders his resignation if his plans are disapproved—A question of veracity—Franklin's pamphlet—Correspondence between Halleck and Franklin—Halleck's letter in reply to Burnside—Severe storm halts Burnside—He hurriedly visits the President—General orders No. 8—Very serious charges—Burnside and Sumner relieved by the President at their own request—Franklin relieved—Hooker appointed to the command of the army—Burnside's valedictory address to the army—His report—His loyalty, courage, and honorable service.

**T**HE date of the President's dispatch to General Burnside forbidding a "general movement," was Dec. 30th, and the same day Burnside replied as follows: "Your dispatch is received. I have rescinded some orders that had already been given. I am summoned to give evidence in court martial to-morrow at Washington, and will see you."

What transpired at that interview can perhaps be inferred from the following correspondence which was apparently suppressed at the time, but the tenor of some of which, evidently became known later, as it appears to have been mentioned by General Franklin, in a pamphlet which he issued some time afterwards, on the battle of Fredericksburg which created some controversy.

January 1st, 1863, President Lincoln addressed the following letter to General Halleck:

"My dear Sir: General Burnside wishes to cross the Rappahannock with his army, but his grand division commanders all oppose the movement. If in such a difficulty as this you do not help, you fail me precisely in the point for which I sought your assistance. You know what General Burnside's plan is, and it is my wish that you go with him to the ground, examine it as far as practicable, confer with the officers, getting their judgment and ascertaining their temper; in a word, gather all the elements for forming a judgment of your own, and then tell General Burnside that you do approve or you do not approve his plan.

Your military skill is useless to me if you will not do this."

This letter bears the following indorsement of the same date, and signed by the President.

"Withdrawn, because considered harsh by General Halleck."

On the same date, General Halleck addressed the following letter to E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War.

"Sir: From my recent interview with the President and yourself, and from the President's letter of this morning, which you delivered to me at your reception, I am led to believe that there is a very important difference of opinion in regard to my relations toward generals commanding armies in the field, and that I cannot perform the duties of my present office satisfactorily at the same time to the President and to myself. I therefore respectfully request that I may be relieved from further duties as General-in-Chief."

In reference to this letter of General Halleck's, it is noted in the records: "As duplicates are found among General Halleck's papers, and no copy is found in the War Department files, it is presumed that the application

was withdrawn upon withdrawal of the President's letter."

The same day General Burnside addressed the following letter to the President:

"His Excellency the President of the United States: Since leaving you this morning, I have determined that it is my duty to place on paper the remarks which I made to you, in order that you may use them or not, as you see proper.

I am in command, as you know, of nearly 200,000 men, 120,000 of whom are in the immediate presence of the enemy, and I cannot conscientiously retain the command without making an unreserved statement of my views.

The Secretary of War has not the confidence of the officers and soldiers, and I feel sure that he has not the confidence of the country. In regard to the latter statement, you are probably better informed than I am.

The same opinion applies with equal force in regard to General Halleck. It seems to be the universal opinion that the movements of the army have not been planned with a view to co-operation and mutual assistance.

I have attempted a movement upon the enemy, in which I have been repulsed, and I am convinced, after mature deliberation, that the army ought to make another movement in the same direction, not necessarily at the same points on the river; but I am not sustained in this by a single grand division commander in my command. My reasons for having issued the order for making this second movement I have already given you in full, and I can see no reasons for changing my views.

Doubtless this difference of opinion between my general officers and myself results from a lack of confidence in me. In this case it is highly necessary that this army should be commanded by some other officer, to whom I will most cheerfully give way.

Will you allow me, Mr. President, to say that it is of the utmost importance that you be surrounded and supported by men who have the confidence of the people and of the army, and who will at all times give you definite and honest opinions in relation to their separate departments, and at the same time give you positive and unswerving support in your public policy, taking at all times their full share of the responsibility for that policy?

In no positions held by gentlemen near you are these conditions more requisite than those of the Secretary of War and General-in-Chief and the commanders of your armies. In the struggle now going on, in which the very existence of our Government is at stake, the interests of no one man are worth the value of a grain of sand, and no one should be allowed to stand in the way of accomplishing the greatest amount of public good.

It is my belief that I ought to retire to private life. I hope you will not understand this to savor of anything like dictation. My only desire is to promote the public good. No man is an accurate judge of the confidence in which he is held by the public and the people around him, and the confidence in my management may be entirely destroyed, in which case it would be a great wrong for me to retain this command for a single day; and, as I before said, I will most cheerfully give place to any other officer."

The following note is made in reference to this letter: "This letter is printed from General Burnside's copy; it does not appear among Mr. Lincoln's papers."

The foregoing letter, when taken in conjunction with the preceding one of the President addressed to General Halleck, it is not difficult to surmise that its substance had formed the basis of the talk at the interview which he had held with General Burnside; and the inference is

very natural, that the President had received the original of which the foregoing was a copy, and, that not desiring its publicity, had destroyed it.

Much light is shed in this letter on the true situation, and one can hardly fail to be impressed or realize, the tremendous weight of responsibility and care then resting upon the shoulders of the President.

While General Burnside was doubtless correct in his assertion that Secretary Stanton "had not, the confidence of the officers and soldiers," that circumstance is in fact, really but a proof of his loyalty and fidelity towards the Government, and verifies the statement of the reasons given by the Secretary for the concerted and determined opposition made against him. It was not true, however, that he did not possess the confidence of the country.

The President, however, did not entirely coincide with General Burnside in his views, at least in regard to displacing him in the command of the army, for he returned again to his headquarters on the Rappahannock, where on January 5th, he addressed letters to General Halleck and also to the President. His letter to General Halleck was as follows:

"I have decided to move the army across the river again, and have accordingly given the directions to the engineers and artillery to make the necessary preparations to effect the crossing. Since I last saw you it has become more apparent that the movement must be made almost entirely upon my own responsibility, so far as this army is concerned; and I do not ask you to assume any responsibility in reference to the mode or place of crossing, but it seems to me that, in making so hazardous a movement, I should receive some general directions from you as to the advisability of crossing at some point, as you are necessarily well informed of the effect at this



time upon other parts of the army of a success or a repulse.

You will readily see that the responsibility of crossing without the knowledge of this effect, and against the opinion of nearly all the general officers, involves a greater responsibility than any officer situated as I am ought to incur.

In view of the President's telegram to me the other day, and with its influence still upon me, I have written to him on this subject, and inclosed to him my resignation directed to the Adjutant General, to be accepted in case it is not deemed advisable for me to cross the river.

I send this resignation because I have no other plan of campaign for this winter, and I am not disposed to go into winter quarters. It may be well to add that recent information goes to show that the enemy's force has not been diminished in our front to any great extent. The bearer of this will bring me any answer, or I shall be glad to hear from you in cipher."

The letter addressed to the President was substantially the same as the one above and was in part as follows:

"Since my return to the army I have become more **than** ever convinced that the general officers of this command are almost unanimously opposed to another crossing of the river, but I am still of the opinion that the crossing should be attempted, and I have accordingly issued orders to the engineers and artillery to prepare for it. There is much hazard in it, as there always is in the majority of military movements, and I cannot begin the movement without giving you notice of it, particularly **as** I know so little of the effect that it may have upon other movements of distant armies. .

I have taken the liberty to write to you personally upon this subject, because it was necessary, as I learn from General Halleck, for you to approve of my general plan,

written at Warrenton, before I could commence the movement, and I think it quite as necessary that you should know of the important movement I am about to make, particularly as it will have to be made in opposition to the views of nearly all my general officers, and after the receipt of a dispatch from you informing me of the opinion of some of them who had visited you.

\*In conversation with you on New Year's morning, I was led to express some opinions which I afterward felt it my duty to place on paper, and to express them verbally to the gentlemen of whom we were speaking, which I did in your presence after handing you the letter. You were not disposed then, as I saw, to retain the letter, and I took it back, but I now return it to you for record, if you wish it.\* . . .

In regard to the last paragraph in the foregoing letter, the following note is made in the Department records: "The paragraph between asterisks is in General Burnside's copy of this letter, but is not in that received by the President. Mr. Lincoln noted upon his copy that the letter had been answered by his indorsement upon General Halleck's letter of January 7."

Inasmuch as there appears to be a question of veracity involved in this matter, it will not be out of place to quote from the correspondence on the subject which later passed between Generals Halleck and Franklin.

The first is an extract from a letter dated May 25th, 1863, marked "personal and private," written by General Halleck, and addressed to General Franklin at York, Pa., to wit: "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of your pamphlet on the battle of Fredericksburg. . . .

You state positively that General Burnside made a "formal and earnest request to the President to remove the Secretary of War and General-in-Chief from the po-

sitions severally occupied by them." If consistent with your own sense of propriety, I respectfully ask that you will give me your authority for this positive assertion on your part. . . ."

General Franklin replied to this on the 27th as follows: " . . . my assertion should have been that General Burnside *said* that he made the request. The facts are these: General Burnside was in Washington on or about January 1, last. He returned to camp, and soon after his return informed me, I think in the presence of General Smith and perhaps others, that he had seen the President and had verbally recommended to him the acceptance of his resignation and the removal of the Secretary of War and yourself.

The President, however, refused to entertain the suggestion, and the next interview General Burnside had with him was in the presence of the Secretary of War and yourself. .

Between the first and second interviews, he had reduced to writing the proposition which he had made in the first interview, and read to the President a letter to him, in which he tendered his own resignation, and proposed the vacation of the Secretary of War's and your positions, for the reason that all three of you had lost the confidence of the people. This is the substance of the story as I heard it from him just after his return to camp.

On one occasion, just before his last attempt to cross the Rappahannock, I was in his tent with Generals Smith Woodbury, Hunt, and Captain Comstock . . . when I said to him in substance, "you yourself recommended to the President the removal of the Secretary of War and General Halleck." He did not deny it; in fact, he acknowledged that he had so recommended. . . . It was not my intention in the pamphlet to refer to any persons

except the committee on the Conduct of the War and General Burnside.

I am sorry that my confidence in General Burnside's honesty led me to assert that he had requested the removal of the Secretary of War and yourself, and I can only account for his numerous mistakes upon the hypothesis that he is crazy."

In replying to the foregoing, in another "private and personal" letter of General Halleck's, addressed to General Franklin on May 29th, he says: "There is one singular statement in your letter, in regard to the embodying of General Burnside's recommendation for our removal in his letter of resignation, and reading it to the President in the presence of the Secretary and myself.

There is not a word of truth in this, so far as I am concerned. The only letter of resignation of General Burnside which I ever saw or heard of made no allusion whatever to either of us. . . ."

The letter of General Halleck of January 7th, in answer to General Burnside's letter of January 5th, with the President's indorsement thereon, which has previously been alluded to was as follows: "Your communication of the 5th, was delivered to me by your aide-de-camp at 12 m. to-day.

In all my communications and interviews with you since you took command of the Army of the Potomac, I have advised a forward movement across the Rappahannock. At our interview at Warrenton, I urged that you should cross by the fords above Fredericksburg rather than to fall down to that place, and, when I left you at Warrenton, it was understood that at least a considerable part of your army would cross by the fords, and I so represented to the President.

It was this modification of the plan proposed by you, that I telegraphed you had received his approval.

When the attempt at Fredericksburg was abandoned, I advised you to renew the attempt at some other point, either in whole or in part to turn the enemy's works, or to threaten their wings or communications; in other words, to keep the enemy occupied till a favorable opportunity offered to strike a decisive blow. I particularly advised you to use your cavalry and light artillery upon his communications, and attempt to cut off his supplies and engage him at an advantage.

In all our interviews I have urged that our first object was, not Richmond, but the defeat or scattering of Lee's army, which threatened Washington and the line of the Upper Potomac. I now recur to these things simply to remind you of the general views which I have expressed, and which I still hold.

The circumstances of the case, however, have somewhat changed since the early part of November. The chances of an extended line of operations are now, on account of the advanced season, much less than then. But the chances are still in our favor to meet and defeat the enemy on the Rappahannock, if we can effect a crossing in a position where we can meet the enemy on favorable or even equal terms.

I therefore still advise a movement against him. The character of that movement, however, must depend upon circumstances which may change any day and almost any hour.

If the enemy should concentrate his forces at the place you have selected for a crossing, make it a feint and try another place. Again, the circumstances at any time may be such as to render an attempt to cross the entire army not advisable. In that case theory suggests that, while the enemy concentrates at that point, advantages can be gained by crossing smaller forces at other points, to cut

off his lines, destroy his communication and capture his rear guards, outposts, etc.

The great object is to occupy the enemy, to prevent his making large detachments or distant raids, and to injure him all you can with the least injury to yourself. If this can be best accomplished by feints of a general crossing and detached real crossings, take that course; if by an actual general crossing, with feints on other points, adopt that course.

There seems to me to be many reasons why a crossing at some point should be attempted. It will not do to keep your large army inactive. As you yourself admit, it devolves on you to decide upon the time, place, and character of the crossing which you may attempt. I can only advise that an attempt be made, and as early as possible."

Following is the indorsement made on this letter on January 8th, and signed by the President:

"General Burnside: I understand General Halleck has sent you a letter of which this is a copy. I approve this letter. I deplore the want of concurrence with you in opinion by your general officers, but I do not see the remedy.

Be cautious, and do not understand that the Government or country is driving you. I do not see how I could profit by changing the command of the Army of the Potomac, and if I did, I should not wish to do it by accepting the resignation of your commission."

On January 10th, General Burnside telegraphed to General Halleck: "Am making my arrangements in accordance with my letter. Reports of deserters indicate that a portion or all of Longstreet's corps is ordered to Tennessee. I will probably know to-night or to-morrow, and will inform you."

In reference to this projected movement, General

Burnside in his report says: "Soon after this I made the fourth attempt, which was to cross at the fords above Falmouth, and moved the entire command for that purpose; but, owing to a severe storm, which rendered the roads almost impassable, together with other obstacles, I was forced to return the army to its old position. . . ."

January 22d, General Burnside telegraphed General Halleck as follows: "I am very anxious to see you. Can you come down, or shall I come up for an hour?"

To this, General Halleck replied: "You must judge for yourself as to the propriety of your coming up. I see no objection. Please answer whether you will come, and when."

The following day, General Burnside sent the following dispatch to the President: "I have prepared some very important orders, and I want to see you before issuing them. Can I see you alone if I am at the White House after midnight? I must be back by 8 o'clock to-morrow morning."

The orders mentioned as having been "prepared," were "General Orders No. 8," and this reference to them is made in the records: "This order was not approved by the President, and was, therefore, never issued. It appeared in the public prints, in the correspondence between Halleck and Franklin, and in Burnside's testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War." They were as follows:

Headquarters Army of the Potomac.

January 23, 1863.

"General Orders No. 8:

1. General Joseph Hooker, major general of volunteers and brigadier-general U. S. Army, having been guilty of unjust and unnecessary criticisms of the actions of his superior officers, and of the authorities, and having by the general tone of his conversation, endeavored to

create distrust in the minds of officers who have associated with him, and having, by omissions and otherwise, made reports and statements which were calculated to create incorrect impressions, and for habitually speaking in disparaging terms of other officers, is hereby dismissed the service of the United States as a man unfit to hold an important commission during a crisis like the present, when so much patience, charity, confidence, consideration, and patriotism are due from every soldier in the field. This order is issued subject to the approval of the President of the United States.

II. Brig. Gen. W. T. H. Brooks, commanding First Division, Sixth Army Corps, for complaining of the policy of the Government, and for using language tending to demoralize his command, is, subject to the approval of the President, dismissed from the military service of the United States.

III. Brig. Gen. John Newton, commanding Third Division, Sixth Army Corps, and Brig. Gen. John Cochran, commanding First Brigade, Third Division, Sixth Army Corps, for going to the President of the United States with criticisms upon the plans of their commanding officer, are, subject to the approval of the President, dismissed from the military service of the United States.

IV It being evident that the following named officers can be of no further service to this army, they are hereby relieved from duty, and will report, in person, without delay, to the Adjutant General, U. S. Army: Maj. Gen. W. B. Franklin, commanding left grand division; Maj. Gen. W. F. Smith, commanding Sixth Corps; Brig. Gen. Samuel D. Sturgis, commanding Second Division, Ninth Corps; Brig. Gen. Edward Ferrero, commanding Second Brigade, Second Division, Ninth Corps; Brig. Gen. John Cochran, commanding First Brigade, Third Division,



Sixth Corps; Lieut. Col. J. H. Taylor, assistant adjutant-general, right grand division.

By command of Maj. Gen. A. E. Burnside."

On January 25th, the President sent the following note to General Halleck: "My dear Sir: Please meet General Burnside here at 10 o'clock this morning,—Executive Mansion."

On the same date, by order of the Secretary of War, General Orders No. 20, were issued to wit:

1. The President of the United States has directed:

1st. That Maj. Gen. A. E. Burnside, at his own request be relieved from the command of the Army of the Potomac.

2d. That Maj. Gen. E. V. Sumner, at his own request be relieved from duty in the Army of the Potomac.

3d. That Maj. Gen. W. B. Franklin be relieved from duty in the Army of the Potomac.

4th. That Maj. Gen. J. Hooker be assigned to the command of the Army of the Potomac.

II. The officers relieved as above will report in person to the Adjutant General of the Army."

On January 26th, from his headquarters in camp near Falmouth, General Burnside published General Orders No. 9, as follows:

"By direction of the President of the United States, the commanding general this day transfers the command of this army to Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker. The short time that he has directed your movements has not been fruitful of victory, or any considerable advancement of our lines, but it has again demonstrated an amount of courage, patience, and endurance that under more favorable circumstances would have accomplished great results.

Continue to exercise these virtues; be true in your devotion to your country and the principles you have sworn

to maintain; give to the brave and skillful general who has so long been identified with your organization, and who is now to command you, your full and cordial support and co-operation, and you will deserve success.

In taking an affectionate leave of the entire army, from which he separates with so much regret, he may be pardoned if he bids an especial farewell to his long-tried associates of the Ninth Corps.

His prayers are that God may be with you, and grant you continued success until the rebellion is crushed."

It will be fitting to close this record with the following extract from General Burnside's final report of his campaign:

"Many difficulties had presented themselves to me in the exercise of the command of this army. I was the first officer to take charge of it after its first commander had been relieved. I had not been identified with it in the Peninsular campaign, and was unacquainted with a large portion of its officers.

The season was very far advanced, which rendered all military movements precarious. The army had not been paid for several months, which caused great dissatisfaction among the soldiers and their friends at home, and increased the number of desertions to a fearful extent, and, in short, there was much gloom and despondency throughout the entire command.

When to this is added the fact that there was a lack of confidence on the part of many of the officers in my ability to handle the army, it does not seem so strange that success did not attend my efforts."

Whatever may be the verdict in regard to General Burnside's management of the army, there cannot be the least shadow of doubt respecting his loyalty, courage and zeal for the cause.

Assuming the command in opposition to his desires,

and at an inopportune season, the miscarriage of his well laid plans for what, in reality, was the first aggressive movement of the Army of the Potomac, cannot in justice be attributed to any fault of his; he did the best he could, would any other under like circumstances have accomplished more?

## CHAPTER XIX

### GENERAL HOOKER'S CAMPAIGN AT CHANCELLORSVILLE

His General Orders No. 1—Lincoln's diplomacy—His letter to Hooker—Not quite satisfied with him—His great wrong to Burnside—Does not fear a dictatorship but wants success—Halleck's letter to Hooker—His instructions—Strength of his army—Hooker reorganizes his army—His letter to Lee—Order regarding leaves of absence—Desertions from the army and facilities employed to aid them—An inner glimpse of military affairs—Common practices of the Confederates—General Schenck's General Orders No. 21—Halleck's dispatch to Hooker—Advise a blow be struck as early as practicable—The President visits the army—Secret plans formulated by Hooker—He ignores Halleck—Reports his plans to the President—His dispatch to General Peck—His orders to Gen. Stoneman—Delay of mails requested—Hooker's grasp of the situation—His expectations and faith in his plans—His directions to Halleck—Halleck's tart answer and order to Hooker—Hooker appeals to the President and is sustained—Reports his progress to the President—His order to Stoneman—The army awaiting his movements—Stoneman's artillery halted by mud—Anxiety of the President—His letter—Hooker disappointed but hopeful—The President to meet Hooker—Stoneman's instructions.

**O**N January 26, 1863, from the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac in camp "Near Falmouth, Va., Major General Joseph Hooker as its commander, published General Orders No. 1, to wit:

"By direction of the President of the United States, the undersigned assumes command of the Army of the Potomac.

He enters upon the discharge of the duties imposed by this trust with a just appreciation of their responsibility. Since the formation of this army he has been identified with its history. He has shared with you its glories and reverses with no other desire than that these relations

might remain unchanged until its destiny should be accomplished.

In the record of your achievements there is much to be proud of, and, with the blessing of God, we will contribute something to the renown of our arms and the success of our cause. To secure these ends, your commander will require the cheerful and zealous co-operation of every officer and soldier in this army.

In equipment, intelligence, and valor the enemy is our inferior; let us never hesitate to give him battle wherever we can find him.

The undersigned only gives expression to the feelings of this army when he conveys to our late commander, Major General Burnside, the most cordial good wishes for his future."

Notwithstanding the apparent ill feeling existing between Generals Burnside and Hooker, the very friendly tone evinced in the respective addresses to the army, doubtless displays the skillful diplomacy of President Lincoln.

The same day that General Hooker assumed command of the army, the President addressed him the following letter:

"General: I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course I have done this upon what appears to me to be sufficient reasons, and yet I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which I am not quite satisfied with you.

I believe you to be a brave and skillful soldier, which, of course, I like. I also believe you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable, if not an indispensable, quality.

You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm; but I think that during Gen-



J. Hooker  
Maj. Genl.



eral Burnside's command of the army you have taken counsel of your ambition, and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer.

I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the Government needed a dictator. Of course, it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship.

The Government will support you to the utmost of its ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done and will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse into the army, of criticising their commander and withholding confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you as far as I can to put it down.

Neither you nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army while such a spirit prevails in it. And now beware of rashness. Beware of rashness, but with energy and sleepless vigilance go forward and give us victories."

On the 31st of January, General Halleck addressed a letter to General Hooker regarding some changes made in his command, and also in reference to his future movements which was as follows: "The Ninth Army Corps, now under your command, will be sent to Fort Monroe, to report to Major General Dix. The troops at Harper's Ferry and in the Shenandoah Valley have been placed under the command of Major General Schenck, headquarters at Baltimore.

Brigadier General Kelley, headquarters at Harper's Ferry, is in the immediate command.

Major General Heintzelman is in command of the



troops in the immediate vicinity and for the defense of Washington. These officers will cordially co-operate with you to the full extent of the means at their command.

Their forces, however, are not sufficient to resist a strong attack from the main army of the rebels, and we must, therefore, look to the Army of the Potomac to either cover these places or to succor them in case they should be seriously threatened by the enemy. . . .

In regard to the operations of your own army, you can best judge when and where it can move to the greatest advantage, keeping in view always the importance of covering Washington and Harper's Ferry either directly or by so co-operating as to be able to punish any force of the enemy sent against them.

I inclose herewith a copy of my letter of the 7th instant to Major General Burnside, *ante*, in answer to an inquiry from him if I approved his crossing the Rappahannock with his army. That letter was submitted to the President and approved by him.

It embodies my views in regard to the duty of the Army of the Potomac to act against the enemy in its front whenever circumstances will permit. . . ."

The strength of the Army of the Potomac at this date, according to the "Abstract from consolidated morning report of Maj. General Joseph Hooker" was:

Total, aggregate present, 239,420; aggregate present and absent, 326,750. Pieces of artillery, 1,048.

According to the "Abstract from the Defenses of Washington," Maj. Gen. S. P. Heintzelman had under his command:

Total, aggregate present, 61,979; aggregate present and absent, 70,219. Pieces of artillery, 858.

And in the "Middle Department" (or Eighth Army Corps) under command of Maj. Gen. Robert C. Schenck, there were:

Total, aggregate present, 33,833; aggregate present and absent, 39,878. Pieces of artillery, 128.

On February 5th, General Hooker abolished the "grand division" organization of the army which had been adopted by General Burnside, in the following "General Order No. 6":

"1. The division of the army into grand divisions, impeding rather than facilitating the dispatch of its current business, and the character of the service it is liable to be called upon to perform being adverse to the movement and operations of heavy columns, it is discontinued, and the corps organization is adopted in its stead.

They will be commanded as follows:

First Corps, Maj. Gen. John F. Reynolds.

Second Corps, Maj. Gen. D. N. Couch.

Third Corps, Brig. Gen. D. E. Sickles, (temporarily).

Fifth Corps, Maj. Gen. George G. Meade.

Sixth Corps, Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick.

Eleventh Corps, Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel.

Twelfth Corps, Maj. Gen. H. W. Slocum.

II. Hereafter the corps will be considered as a unit for the organization of the artillery. . . .

III. The cavalry of the army will be consolidated into one corps, under the command of Brigadier-General Stoneman, who will make the necessary assignments for detached duty.

IV. The foregoing changes in command will be made as early as convenient. . . ."

In reply to a communication from General R. E. Lee, for permission for two English officers then in Richmond, to pass through his lines, General Hooker on February 4th, returned the following answer: "In reply to the application of Lord Huntington and Colonel Leslie of England, for permission to enter our lines, I am instructed by

the commander-in-chief of the United States Army as follows:

“Foreign officers will not be permitted to pass our lines without a pass from the War Department, and such passes are only given on application of the minister or diplomatic agent who represents their Government.”

Your application has been referred to the Commander-in-Chief.”

The question of the granting of “leaves of absence,” and also that of desertions from the army, were subjects of considerable complaint and trouble at this period. Concerning the former, General Halleck on February 3d, gave to General Hooker the following stringent directions: “In no case will commanders of grand divisions, army corps, etc., be allowed to grant leaves.

The number of applications sent to the War Department, approved by such officers, show a recklessness and carelessness exceedingly reprehensible, for if one-half so approved were granted, the efficiency of the army would be completely destroyed.

All leaves to officers to visit Washington without the consent of the War Department are deemed null and void and hereafter all general officers who come here on leave not properly granted will be dismissed. . . . Any officer who remains here twenty-four hours without authority will be arrested.”

The extent of the desertions from the army and the means employed to stop it, as well as the facilities employed to aid desertion may be gleaned from the following dispatches.

February 6th, General Hooker reported to the Adjutant General, that, “. . . as desertions from this army are now at an end, or nearly so. I respectfully recommend that no infantry from my command be sent to Maryland. The dragoons now there, in my opinion, is a

sufficient force to arrest all deserters attempting to make their escape from service in that direction. . . .” On the 13th, he forwarded with request that the Government take some steps to put a stop to practices complained of in the following dispatch of Maj. Gen. Wm. H. French, viz: “A few days since, the commanding officer of the One Hundred and Thirty-second Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers received an anonymous note from a town in that state, advising him that citizens’ clothing was being mailed to soldiers in this army to facilitate their desertion.

He had the mails supervised, and yesterday he brought to me two packages of clothing (citizens) which had arrived in the mail. . . . There was also a letter of advice from a female relative, clearly stating the object of the transmittal. The lieutenant colonel of this regiment is of opinion that many men are assisted in this matter through the Government mails, and I deem it of such importance as to request a reference where the evil can be corrected. . . .”

The following extract, from a letter addressed from Winchester February 10th, by General R. H. Milroy to General Schenck may perhaps be of interest as affording an inner glimpse of military conditions at this period: “I learned yesterday by a deserter from Imboden’s camp that he has been to Richmond recently, and been commissioned brigadier general . . . and has been assigned command of the country east of the Shenandoah Mountains, and is preparing for a campaign into West Virginia.

I respectfully ask to be permitted to interfere with this arrangement. . . . I respectfully ask that my whole command may be assembled at this place, and that the injunction on my movements be removed. If this cannot be done soon, I will be compelled to resign, as I would

much prefer being a private in an active fighting army to being kept in command of the stationary advance of a railroad guard under a brigadier general not of a very hostile or pugnacious disposition towards traitors.

My scouts captured a rebel conscripting lieutenant yesterday, who has been a notorious bushwhacker, horse-thief, and murderer known to have killed 2 of Banks' men in cold blood. What shall I do with him? I would like to hang him if Jefferson Davis and Halleck did not make too big a fuss about it. He richly deserves it. . . ."

P. S. Why is it that we can have no paymaster here? It is almost an unbearable wrong to the poor soldiers."

The following order issued by General Schenck on the 29th of March, will also shed some light on practices which were not uncommon with the confederate soldiers:

"General Orders No. 21. I. Officers and soldiers of the army of the so-called Confederate states having in many instances, by capture or by stripping the bodies of the dead, possessed themselves of uniform, clothing, and equipments of officers and soldiers of the United States, which articles of uniform they have afterward worn and used to aid them in making their way within the lines of this army, and to enable them to approach and deceive, and sometimes make prisoners of, those who did not recognize them, by reason of such disguise as enemies, it is ordered: That hereafter any rebel officer or soldier who shall be found and taken, either within the lines or otherwise wearing any article of clothing, or any accoutrement belonging to the usual uniform of a Union officer or soldier, so as to make such rebel officer or soldier appear as an officer or soldier of the United States, shall not be held or considered as a prisoner of war but shall be treated and dealt with as a spy. And proof of the possession and wearing by a rebel officer or soldier of such Union uniform shall be taken to be sufficient evidence

in itself of his character as a spy by any court martial or military commission before which he may be ordered for trial.

II. Maj. Gen. R. H. Milroy, commanding the Second Division of this army corps, is directed to communicate copies of this order, by flag of truce, to the commander of the rebel forces in the valley of the Shenandoah."

During the months of February and March, the Army of the Potomac remained in statu quo on the Rappahannock; meantime the rebel army began to manifest signs of activity in various directions.

On March 27th, General Halleck sent the following dispatch to General Hooker at Falmouth:

"Dispatches from Generals Dix, Foster, and Hunter, and from the west, indicate that the rebel troops formerly under Lee are now much scattered for supplies, and for operations elsewhere. It would seem, under these circumstances, advisable that a blow be struck by the Army of the Potomac as early as practicable. It is believed that during the next few days several conflicts will take place, both south and west, which may attract the enemy's particular attention to those points."

About this time the President had paid a visit to General Hooker at his headquarters, and apparently a general plan of campaign had been formulated. What the proposed movements were to be was kept a profound secret, but their main features, as will be developed in the succeeding reports was a cavalry demonstration around the rebel army, destroying his communications with Richmond, and culminating in a combined attack on his front.

In his operations, General Hooker appears to have had no use whatever for General Halleck, and (indeed, with but few exceptions, he ignored him altogether. The following letter, addressed to the President by General

Hooker April 11th, will explain his proposed movements as they had been finally determined upon by him:

“After giving the subject my best reflection, I have concluded that I will have more chance of inflicting a heavier blow upon the enemy by turning his position to my right, and, if practicable, to sever his connections with Richmond with my dragoon force and such light batteries as it may be deemed advisable to send with them.

I am apprehensive that he will retire before me the moment I should succeed in crossing the river, and over the shortest line to Richmond, and thus escape being seriously crippled.

I hope that when the cavalry have established themselves on the line between him and Richmond, they will be able to hold him and check his retreat until I can fall on his rear, or, if not that, I will compel him to fall back by the way of Culpeper and Gordonsville, over a longer line than my own, with his supplies cut off.

The cavalry will probably cross the river above the Rappahannock Bridge, thence to Culpeper and Gordonsville and across to the Aquia Railroad, somewhere in the vicinity of Hanover Court House.

They will probably have a fight in the vicinity of Culpeper, but not one that should cause them much delay or embarrassment. I have given directions for the cavalry to be in readiness to commence the movement on Monday morning next.

While the cavalry are moving, I shall threaten the passage of the river at various points, and, after they have passed well to the enemy's rear, shall endeavor to effect the crossing.

I hope, Mr. President, that this plan will receive your approval. It will obviate the necessity of detaching a force from Washington in the direction of Warrenton, while I think it will enhance my chances for inflicting a

heavy blow upon the enemy's forces. We have no news from over the river to-day, the enemy refusing to let us have the newspapers. I sincerely trust that you reached home safely and in good time yesterday. We all look back to your visit with great satisfaction."

On the 12th, the President telegraphed General Hooker as follows: "Your letter, by the hand of General Butterfield, is received, and will be conformed to. The thing you dispense with would have been ready by midday to-morrow."

April 13th, General Hooker received the following dispatch from General John J. Peck at Suffolk: "Intelligent and reliable deserters state that the force in my front, of 35,000 men, under Longstreet, has come from Fredericksburg in expectation of inaction on your part. D. H. Hill is said to be advancing from North Carolina."

To this dispatch of General Peck's, General Hooker replied as follows: "All of Longstreet's forces that have gone from here left in January and February last. None have left since. The enemy will be disappointed in the expectation you mention in your dispatch."

General Peck the same day also telegraphed to General Halleck, saying: "Longstreet's force is pretty well settled at 35,000. Co-operation of Hill expected. One division, at least, should be sent here, as they are fighting for the James River. He has one hundred and twenty pieces of artillery."

On the 14th, General Hooker's assistant Adjt. General sent the following dispatch addressed to the "Commanding officer, Cavalry Corps: "I am directed by the major-general commanding to forward for your information a copy of a telegram received from Major General Peck this morning.

If the enemy are on the line of the Blackwater, in the number stated, he must have withdrawn all his forces



from Richmond, and you can have nothing to apprehend from there. This information must not delay or divert you from the main object of your expedition, as set forth in your instructions. The general is exceedingly anxious that you should be at your work on the Aquia and Richmond lines at the earliest practical moment."

On the same date, Chief Quartermaster General Ingalls telegraphed the "Postmaster at Washington as follows: "Major General Hooker, commanding this army, would like to have the entire mails of to-day from this army detained twenty-four hours in your office, if you can do so with propriety. He has very urgent reasons for making this request, as you may readily imagine. Inform me whether or not you will comply."

From the foregoing dispatches it can be readily inferred that the plans of General Hooker had been fully matured by him and, that he had not only a full grasp of the situation confronting him, but, a not unreasonable or extravagant faith in the ultimate brilliant success of his plans should they be faithfully carried out.

His expectations were, that General Dix at Fort Monroe, with Peck at Suffolk, would detain the force under Longstreet for the security of Richmond, while Stoneman would derange and destroy the communications of Lee; upon the accomplishment of which he had timed his movements for an attack at the front.

It is quite probable that General Peck was not made acquainted with General Hooker's plans, and that under the circumstances the situation confronting him should render him uneasy; the President also, was in great anxiety as indicated by his telegram of this date to General Hooker, saying: "Would like to have a letter from you as soon as convenient."

General Hooker replied to the President's telegram as follows:

“I had supposed the enemy were attacking Peck to prevent his re-enforcing Foster; but if with the numbers alleged, it must be for a more important purpose. As soon as Stoneman’s designs are discovered to the enemy, Peck will be relieved. The enemy have not to exceed 30,000 men between Richmond and Suffolk, including both of those towns.”

On the 13th, General Hooker sent the following dispatch to General Halleck:

“If it is deemed of importance to keep open the telegraph communication to this point, it will require that a regiment of cavalry be sent from Washington to patrol and guard the line via Occoquan to Dumfries. My cavalry have other duties that will prevent their attending to this. The force should be sent without delay.”

To this dispatch General Halleck made the following tart reply:

“I do not think that the safety of Washington depends upon the maintenance of communication with your army, but I think it is your duty to maintain your communications with Washington, and to keep the War Department advised of all your movements and intended movements. You therefore have my orders to keep up such communications.”

It would seem from the foregoing dispatches, that even General Halleck was not well advised respecting General Hooker’s plans and movements; however, on the following day the latter sent this dispatch to Secretary Stanton: “I have the honor to transmit herewith copies of my telegram to Major General Halleck and his reply thereto. I respectfully request that these be laid before the President of the United States without delay.”

On the same evening, General Hooker received the following dispatch from General Halleck:

“General Heintzelman has ordered a regiment of cavalry to scout south of Occoquan and Dumfries.”

On the 15th of April, General Hooker addressed the following letter to the President: “A letter from Major General Stoneman, dated 1 p. m. yesterday, informs me that his command will be across the river before daylight this morning. It was his intention to cross at three points, all above the Rappahannock station. I sent him six days’ rations for men and animals, by wagons, to be distributed just before his passage of the river. The wagons are now on their return.

From the Rappahannock, if he should meet with no unusual delay, he will strike the Aquia and Richmond Railroad on the night of the second day.

Meanwhile I shall do what I can to keep the enemy up to their works in my front, and, if they should fall back, shall pursue with all the vigor practicable.

Up to late last night the enemy appeared to have no suspicions of our designs. This morning I can see nothing from the storm. I am rejoiced that Stoneman had two good days to go up the river, and was enabled to cross it before it had become too much swollen. If he can reach his position, the storm and mud will not damage our prospects. He has been furnished with a copy of Major General Peck’s dispatch, regarding the number of the enemy in his immediate front. If it should be true, Richmond can have no soldiers in the city at this time.”

The following dispatch was also sent by Assistant Adjt. General Williams, to General Stoneman:

“Your dispatches of 9 and 10.35 o’clock, of this date, are this moment received. As you stated in your communication of yesterday that you would be over the river with your command at daylight this morning, it was so communicated to Washington, and it was hoped that the crossing had been made in advance of the rise in the river.

If your artillery is your only hinderance to your advance, the major general commanding directs that you order it to return, and proceed to the execution of your orders without it. It is but reasonable to suppose that if you cannot make use of that arm of the service, the enemy cannot.

If it is practicable to carry into execution the general instructions communicated to you on the 12th instant, the major-general commanding expects you to make use of such means as will, in your opinion, enable you to accomplish them, and that as speedily as possible. The army is now awaiting your movement.

I am directed to add that in view of the swollen condition of the streams it is not probable, in the event of your being able to advance, that you will be troubled by the infantry of the enemy."

That evening, General Hooker telegraphed the President: "Just heard from General Stoneman. His artillery has been brought to a halt by the mud, one division only having crossed the river. If practicable, he will proceed without it. All the streams are swimming."

In reply to the above, the President wrote him as follows: "It is now 10.15 p. m. An hour ago I received your letter of this morning, and a few moments later your dispatch of this evening. The latter gives me considerable uneasiness. The rain and mud, of course, were to be calculated upon. General S. is not moving rapidly enough to make the expedition come to anything. He has now been out three days, two of which were unusually fair weather, and all three without hinderance from the enemy, and yet he is not 25 miles from where he started.

To reach his point he still has 60 to go, another river (the Rapidan) to cross, and will be hindered by the enemy. By arithmetic, how many days will it take him to do it? I do not know that any better can be done, but I great-

ly fear it is another failure already. Write me often. I am very anxious."

On the 17th, General Hooker addressed the President as follows: "Mr. President: I have the honor to acknowledge your communication of the night of the 15th instant, and, in compliance with your request, transmit herewith a letter from General Stoneman, dated the 16th instant, as it will fully inform you of the circumstances attending his march up the river and also of his present position. The letter was this moment received.

His failure to accomplish speedily the objects of his expedition is a source of deep regret to me, but I can find nothing in his conduct of it requiring my animadversion or censure. We cannot control the elements.

From your letter, I conclude that you had misapprehended the position of his advance the night of the second day out from here, which was on the south side of the Rappahannock, and 50 miles from this camp. His own dispatch was dated Bealeton, in the vicinity of his rear guard. I have given directions for him to remain in his present position, holding himself in readiness to march as soon after the roads and rivers will permit as practicable, at the shortest notice, and I still hope to turn his movement to some good account.

I do not regard him out of position, as, in case of an advance of so large an army, it would be necessary to throw the main portion of his force well on to my right flank. It would take until doomsday to pass all this army over one or two lines. He has a week's supplies on hand, and, if it should become necessary to replenish, it can be done as readily at Rappahannock station as at Falmouth. I have sent to learn the condition of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad.

No one, Mr. President, can be more anxious than myself to relieve your cares and anxieties, and you may be

assured that I shall spare no labor and suffer no opportunity to pass unimproved for so doing.

We have no reason to suppose that the enemy have any knowledge of the design of General Stoneman's movements."

April 18th, Secretary Stanton sent General Hooker the following dispatch: "The President will leave here for Aquia to see you to-morrow (Sunday) morning at 7 o'clock, expecting to reach there about 10 a. m. Can you meet him there?"

The following extracts from a letter of instructions sent to General Stoneman this date, will afford an idea of some of the duties expected from him: " . . . the difficulty of supplying your command in its present position, in addition to other reasons, renders it necessary for you to resume your forward movement at the earliest practicable moment. You must hold your troops and your supplies in readiness to this end. When you leave, it should be with supplies for six days, and these must not be distributed among other commands on any consideration whatever. . . .

It was intended to forward you to-day five days' additional rations and forage, but if, as reported by your quartermaster, you have 12,000 men and 17,000 animals, it will fall short of that estimate. . . . No evidence exists here that the enemy has made any change in the disposition of his forces from the United States Ford down the river in consequence of your movement.

Your delay in consequence of the storm may enable him to bring up a small force to dispute the passage of the river. It can only be a small one, and must be knocked out of the way. . . .

The major-general commanding directs that you bear in mind that a part of your route lies along the line over which the enemy receives his supplies, and it may be with

reason expected that some portion of them will fall into your hands. From the character of your movement, it should not be expected that you will be provided with full rations every hour in the day. Such never has been and never will be the case.

If, from your delay, Culpeper or Gordonsville should be found to have been re-enforced with infantry of considerable number, he suggests that you go around them. If the enemy has brought his forces on to the Rappahannock, he can have nothing in rear, and when his railroad bridges are destroyed he has no means of following you when you pass him. This can only be ascertained by feeling them.

Please advise me the moment you determine to resume your forward movement. . . .”

## CHAPTER XX

Rain and high water compels a change of plans—Hooker's dispatch to Peck—Order to Stoneman—Stoneman's command separated by impassable streams—Hooker's orders for a concerted attack on the enemy—Activity of the rebels near the border alarms Pennsylvania—The President's dispatch to Governor Curtin—Hooker's order to Gen. Sedgwick—Is confident of success and hopes the rebels will attack—Relies on success of Stoneman's movements—Governor Curtin's dispatch—The President reassures him—Sedgwick ordered to attack and connect with Hooker—Gen. Schenck asks information about Hooker—His request denied—The battle of Chancellorsville—A terrible battle—Gen. Berry killed—Hooker wounded—Hooker's dispatch to the President—His well laid plans.

**T**HE interruption caused by the elements, to the prompt execution of the plans of General Hooker, was a great disappointment to him, as well as a source of anxiety to the President; and his apparent inactivity, resulting from the enforced delay in General Stoneman's projected movements, doubtless prompted some of the offensive demonstrations of the enemy at this time in progress in Western Virginia, around Suffolk, and at other points, and creating general anxiety.

On April 21st, General Hooker reported to the President: "My latest advices from Major General Stoneman were up to 9 o'clock yesterday morning. At that time his command was moving to ascertain whether or not the fords were practicable. If he had crossed, I cannot but feel that I should have been informed of it ere this.

General Stoneman reports that much more rain has fallen in the emountains than lower down the river; hence the slowness of the waters in falling. . . .

The weather appears to continue adverse to the execution of my plans as first formed, as, in fact, for all others;



but if these do not admit of speedy solution, I feel that I must modify them to conform to the condition of things as they are.

I was attached to the movement as first projected, as it promised unusual success; but if it fails, I will project a movement which I trust will secure us success, but not to so great an extent, and one in the execution of which I shall be able to exercise personal supervision."

Later on the same day, he also sent the following: "Advices from Major-General Stoneman of to-day inform me that he has not been able to effect a passage of the river, from the depth of water at the fords. I have given directions for him to remain in position for the present, as his presence above tends to deceive the enemy.

As I can only cross the river by stratagem without great loss, which I wish to avoid, it may be a few days before I make it. I must threaten several points, and be in readiness to spring when a suitable opportunity presents itself.

Deserters inform me that the talk in the rebel camp is that when we cross the river it is their intention to fall in our rear and attack our depot at Aquia. The recent arrival of a pontoon train at Hamilton's Crossing lends plausibility to these reports. . . ."

On the same date, General Hooker received the following dispatch from General Peck at Suffolk: "General Halleck has just left my headquarters. General Longstreet is here, waiting Hill or other troops. I hold everything yet. How do you get along?"

In reply to this dispatch General Hooker answered: "Am glad to hear good tidings from you. You must be patient with me. I must play with these devils before I can spring. Remember that my army is at the bottom of a well and the enemy holds the top."

On the 22d, instructions were sent to General Stoneman

as follows: "Your telegram of this date received. It is hoped the arrival of the trains has enabled you to replenish your supplies, both of subsistence and forage, and it is expected that you are again prepared for a forward movement so far as regards your stores.

The commanding general therefore directs that you proceed across the river to-morrow morning, if the fords are practicable. The general does not look for one moment's delay in your advance from any cause that human effort can obviate, and directs me to add that this army is awaiting your movement."

At 12 m. on the following day, General Stoneman sent the following discouraging dispatch from Warrenton Junction: "The command is now separated by impassable streams, and I am unable to communicate with the different portions of it owing to the small streams being swimming. The pickets are cut off by high water."

April 26th, General Hooker received the following telegram from General Peck at Suffolk: "Longstreet is still here. Heavy artillery is coming to him from Petersburg. The storm has ceased; mud drying up. Advise me in cipher of as much as you deem proper of your operations.

To this, General Hooker replied as follows: "Your dispatch received. I have been delayed in my operations by the severe storm. I have communicated to no one what my intentions are. If you were here, I could properly and willingly impart them to you. So much is found out by the enemy in my front with regard to movements, that I have concealed my designs from my own staff, and I dare not intrust them to the wires, knowing as I do that they are so often tapped."

In the meantime, active preparations had been begun for a forward movement of the army and a concerted attack upon the enemy. Orders to this end had been given to the various corps commanders, whose movements were

to be made quietly, and as far as possible, concealed from the enemy.

The character and purpose of these several movements will be understood from the following extracts from an order issued April 27th as follows:

“The major-general commanding directs that the Sixth Corps, Major General Sedgwick, First Corps, Major General Reynolds and Thirds Corps, Major General Sickles, put themselves in position to cross the river as follows: Sixth Corps at Franklin’s Crossing; First Corps at the crossing below at Pollock’s Mill Creek, and the Third Corps as a support to cross at either point. These movements to be made so that the respective corps are in position—the First and Sixth on or before 3.30 a. m. of the 29th, and the Third Corps on or before 4.30 a. m. of the 29th, . . . The troops, as far as possible, ought to be concealed up to the moment the demonstration is made.

The bridges, two at each crossing to be laid complete before 3.30 a. m. of the 29th. . . . General Sedgwick, pending the operation, will be charged with the command of the three corps mentioned, and will make a demonstration in full force on Wednesday morning upon the enemy’s defenses, with a view of securing the Telegraph road. In the event of the enemy detaching any considerable part of his force against the troops operating at the west of Fredericksburg, he will attack and carry their works at all hazards. . . . In case the enemy should fall back upon Richmond, he will pursue them with the utmost vigor, fighting them whenever and wherever he can come up with them. . . .”

On the 28th, the following order was issued to General Meade: “I am directed by the major-general commanding to request that you will exercise all of your accustomed zeal and devotion in hastening the passage of the

troops across the Rappahannock. He feels assured that you will.

It is a great object to effect the passage of the Rapidan to-morrow, as you well know, and in so doing the United States Ford will be uncovered, and our line of communication established with the left wing of the army. Brigadier General Warren will report as soon as you cross the Rapidan."

The orders to General Slocum were in part as follows: "I am directed by the major-general commanding to inform you that so long as the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps are operating on the same line, you will exercise the command of both.

The general directs that the Eleventh Corps cross to the opposite side of the river to-night, and that the Twelfth Corps commence crossing at daylight to-morrow morning, and to be thrown over with all possible rapidity, and both corps march by the most direct route, without delay, and seize the bridge, if standing, and the ford at Germanna Mills. . . .

General Meade will move on almost a parallel line at the same time, and will be in easy communication with you. You will cross at Ely's Ford. If his passage should be disputed, as you will probably be able to learn from the firing . . . , the general directs that you dispatch a corps along the south bank of the Rapidan, to knock away the enemy, to enable him to cross, and, when the Fifth Corps is across, that you push on with both of your corps to Chancellorsville, at which point the three corps will come together, and which you will command by virtue of your seniority. . . . The general desires that not a moment be lost until our troops are established at or near Chancellorsville. From that moment all will be ours. "

In the meantime the rebels had become very active in their demonstrations in Western Virginia near the border

line of Pennsylvania, and the inhabitants in that locality were becoming greatly alarmed. On the 29th Governor Curtin sent the following dispatch to Secretary Stanton: "It is reported to me that the rebels have taken and now hold Morgantown in force. Please say if you have any information, and if force will be sent on if true. We have no force in the state, and you could send troops before we could organize any."

To this inquiry President Lincoln on the same day returned the following answer: "I do not think the people of Pennsylvania should be uneasy about invasion. Doubtless a small force of the enemy is flourishing about in the northern part of Virginia on the "scowhorn" principle, on purpose to divert us in another quarter. I believe it is nothing more. We think we have adequate force close after them."

On April 29th, General Peck telegraphed to General Hooker from Suffolk as follows: "I think I can hold Longstreet here for some time, which will favor your operations very materially. When he retires, it will only be to his two railroads, where he can go to Lee or strike at me, according to circumstances."

You and I will have plenty of work. He is bridging the Blackwater for railroad purposes. The impression is strong that Hill will leave North Carolina and join Longstreet."

The same date, General Hooker replied: "I have today commenced my operations here. The result may be to draw from your front, and afford you an opportunity to push or hold them."

April 30th, General Hooker telegraphed to General Couch at United States Ford as follows: "Third Corps is under orders to be across the river at United States Ford at 7 a. m. to-morrow. The column is en route. . . . Headquarters will be at Chancellorsville to-night."

While General Hooker was with the army at the front, General Butterfield, his chief of staff remained at headquarters near Falmouth, from which point communication was maintained with the different parts of the army.

On the same date, the following dispatch was sent to General Sedgwick commanding the left wing of the army: "I am directed by the major-general commanding to inform you that his headquarters will be at Chancellorsville to-night. It is proposed that the army now at that point will assume the initiative to-morrow morning, and will advance along the line of the Plank road uncovering what is called Bank's Ford, where bridges will be at once thrown across the river, which route will then become the shortest line of communication between the two wings of the army. Major General Butterfield will remain at the present headquarters, and will at once transmit to the major-general commanding any communications you may desire to send him.

It is not known, of course, what effect the advance will have upon the enemy, and the general commanding directs that you observe his movements with the utmost vigilance and, should he expose a weak point, attack him in full force and destroy him. . . . If any portion of his organized forces should pass off to the east of the railroad, you will, by detachments, pursue until you destroy or capture him. . . . Be observant of your opportunities, and when you strike let it be done to destroy. . . ."

Another dispatch of the same date from General Butterfield to General Sedgwick read as follows: "The Fifth Eleventh, and Twelfth Corps are all up at Chancellorsville. Two divisions of Couch's probably now crossing. Sickles, as you are aware, is on his way there. Nothing that we can get at present indicates much force of the enemy in their front. The general as he left expressed great anxiety for prompt and frequent reports and information.

I think it would favor operations if you were to make tremendous demonstrations of camp fires to-night. . . .

The general in speaking privately to me about the order in which the movements of the Fifth, Eleventh and Twelfth Corps were commended, said he had been informed that there was some little feeling down on the left that they were not counted in. He said that would all come right. He expected, when he left here, if he met with no serious opposition, to be on the heights west of Fredericksburg to-morrow noon or shortly after, and, if opposed strongly to-morrow night. . . .

Please consider this confidential, and written privately for your information. Communicate as much of it as you think proper, confidentially, to Reynolds."

General Dix telegraphed to General Hooker from Fort Monroe: "We are invested at Suffolk by a superior force, but are getting stronger every day. I returned from there last evening. If the enemy attacks, he will fare badly. A successful movement on your part, for which we are all most anxious, will be of great service to us by preventing Longstreet from being further re-enforced, and may compel him to withdraw."

In reply to this, General Hooker telegraphed: "The enemy has need of every man here. He has his hands full. Rely on this. I can say no more."

On the 1st of May, General Hooker sent the following dispatch to General Butterfield: "From character of information have suspended attack. The enemy may attack me. I will try it. Tell Sedgwick to keep a sharp look out and attack if can succeed."

Later in the day, he again telegraphed: "After having ordered an attack at 2 o'clock, and most of the troops in position, I suspended the attack on the receipt of news from the other side of the river. Hope the enemy will be emboldened to attack me. I did feel certain of success. If

his communications are cut, he must attack me. I have a strong position. All the enemy's cavalry are on my flanks, which leads me to suppose that our dragoons will meet with no obstacle in cutting their communications."

At 6 o'clock p. m. the following "Circular" was issued to corps commanders: "Corps commanders will set their pioneers at work in their fronts to make abatis and clearing for artillery. The pioneers will be kept at work during the night."

At 8.45 p. m. General Hooker sent the following dispatch to General Butterfield: "Direct that the utmost vigilance be exercised by the commands of Generals Sedgwick and Gibbon to learn the earliest movements of the enemy on the opposite side of the river, and take all possible measures to prevent them.

General Hunt has already received orders to put guns in position to prevent the enemy's crossing. . . . Telegraph all the information that you have, concerning the re-enforcement of the enemy from Richmond, to Washington, as it may have an important bearing on movements elsewhere. Say that all of the enemy's cavalry are in my immediate presence, which I trust will enable Stoneman to do a land-office business in the interior.

I think the enemy in his desperation will be compelled to attack me on my own ground. Observe all his movements and inform me of them. In half an hour more I should probably have been engaged. I am all right."

Some idea of the extent of territory covered by the lines of the army, and of the responsibility and skill required to perfect the concerted and harmonious action of its several parts, may be formed from the following dispatch from General Butterfield to General Sedgwick:

"General Hooker telegraphs you to throw your whole force on the Bowling Green road and no other. My tele-



graphic communication to the general is roundabout, and takes three hours' time."

While these various movements were in progress, Prof. Lowe was constantly watching from his balloon, and reporting the movements of the enemy; on May 1st, at 11.30 a. m. General Hooker telegraphed to General Butterfield to "Direct Major General Sedgwick to threaten an attack in full force at 1 o'clock and to continue in that attitude until further orders. Let the demonstration be as severe as can be, but not an attack." This dispatch was not received by General Butterfield until 4.55 p. m.

Governor Curtin this day telegraphed the President as follows: "I am so importuned from the west, where a great deal of alarm and anxiety justly prevails, that you will pardon me for earnestly requesting an answer to my dispatch of this p. m., so that I may be informed what preparations or means, if any, are being made use of or desired to protect this state from threatened invasion. . .

I have dispatches, stating that the Union forces have been repulsed and are falling back into Pennsylvania. If it is your pleasure that I should call out the militia, immediate arrangements should be made for their transportation and subsistence. "

The President replied to the Governor as follows: "The whole disposable force at Baltimore and elsewhere in reach have already been sent after the enemy that alarms you.

The worst thing the enemy could do for himself would be to weaken himself before Hooker, and therefore it is safe to believe he is not doing it, and the best thing he could do for himself would be to get us so scared as to bring part of Hooker's force away, and that is just what he is trying to do. . . ."

On May 2d, General Butterfield sent the following dispatch to General Sedgwick: "The major-general com-

manding directs that you cross the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg on the receipt of this order, and at once take up your line of march on the Chancellorsville road until you connect with him.

You will attack and destroy any force you may fall in with on the road. You will leave all your trains behind except the pack mule train of small ammunition, and march to be in the vicinity of the general at daylight.

You will probably fall upon the rear of the forces commanded by General Lee, and between you and the major-general commanding he expects to use him up."

In another dispatch, he says: "Seize the mayor of Fredericksburg or any citizen. Put them ahead as guides, on pain of death for false information. "

The President, in further reply to Governor Curtin, telegraphed him as follows: General Halleck tells me he has a dispatch from General Schenck this morning informing him that our forces have joined, and that the enemy menacing Pennsylvania will have to fight or run to day.

I hope I am not less anxious to do my duty to Pennsylvania than yourself, but I really do not yet see the justification for incurring the trouble and expense of calling out the militia. I shall keep watch and try to do my duty. Our forces are exactly between the enemy and Pennsylvania."

The following dispatch was also sent to Secretary Stanton from General Schenck at Baltimore: "In view of my dispositions in the Valley and on the railroad, it is desirable I should know whether you can tell me of General Hooker. The night is full of rumors."

In answer to this, Secretary Stanton sent the following: "You may rest assured that General Hooker's operations are progressing successfully and in all respects as desired unless you are otherwise advised by this department.

Any mishap you will be promptly notified of; but for

obvious reasons details of his movements and position cannot be given while in successful progress."

At 8.45 o'clock on the morning of May 3rd, General Butterfield received from Chief Quartermaster Ingalls at United States Ford, the following dispatch:

"A most terribly bloody conflict has raged since daylight. Enemy in great force in our front and on the right, but at this moment we are repulsing him on all sides. Carnage is fearful. General Hooker is safe so far. Berry is killed. I return to the front, but will keep you advised when in my power. Our trains are all safe, and we shall be victorious. Our cavalry has not come up."

General Butterfield sent the following dispatch to the President: "Though not directed or specially authorized to do so by General Hooker, I think it not improper that I should advise you that a battle is in progress."

Again at 12.45 p. m., General Ingalls telegraphed as follows: "I think we have had the most terrible battle ever witnessed on earth. I think our victory will be certain, but the general told me he would say nothing just yet to Washington, except that he is doing well.

In an hour or two the matter will be a fixed fact. I believe the enemy is in flight now, but we are not sure."

General Butterfield sent this dispatch to the President: "From all reports yet collected, the battle has been most fierce and terrible. Loss heavy on both sides. General Hooker slightly, but not severely wounded. He has preferred thus far that nothing should be reported, and does not know of this, but I cannot refrain from saying this much to you. You may expect his dispatch in a few hours, which will give the result."

To this the Secretary of War replied: "The President thanks you for your telegrams, and hopes you will keep him advised as rapidly as any information reaches you;"

and later, the President telegraphed: "Where is General Hooker? Where is Sedgwick? Where is Stoneman?"

General Butterfield replied as follows:

"General Hooker is at Chancellorsville. General Sedgwick, with 15,000 to 20,000 men, at a point 3 or 4 miles out from Fredericksburg, on the road to Chancellorsville. Lee between them. Stoneman has not been heard from. This is the situation at this hour from latest reports, 4.30 p. m."

The same afternoon General Hooker, through an orderly by way of United States Ford, and from thence by telegraph, sent the following dispatch to the President:

"We have had a desperate fight yesterday and to-day, which has resulted in no success to us, having lost a position of two lines, which had been selected for our defense.

It is now 1.30 o'clock, and there is still some firing of artillery. We may have another turn at it this p. m. I do not despair of success. If Sedgwick could have gotten up, there could have been but one result. As it is impossible for me to know the exact position of Sedgwick as regards his ability to advance and take part in the engagement, I cannot tell when it will end.

We will endeavor to do our best. My troops are in good spirits. We have fought desperately to-day. No general ever commanded a more devoted army."

From the preceding reports it would seem, apparently, that no campaign, or battle of the war had been more carefully planned; that gave better promise of success; or was more determinedly prosecuted by any general, than was that of Chancellorsville. How those plans of General Hooker terminated, with their subsequent results, will be best told in what follows.

## CHAPTER XXI

General Butterfield's report to the President—Generals Stoneman and Sedgwick failed to execute their orders—Hooker to recross the river—Expiration of terms of enlistment a reason—The President's dispatches—Secretary Stanton's circular—The President's letter—Results of Stoneman's raid—Hooker decides upon a plan for attack—Kilpatrick's brilliant success—Stoneman's operations unsatisfactory to Hooker—Gen. Averell relieved of his command—Hooker's report to Secretary Stanton—His report to the President—His movements delayed by expiring enlistments—Death of Stonewall Jackson—Letter from the President—Report of General Halleck—His views of the situation—His relations with Hooker—The rebels become aggressive—The exertions of the governments—Conscriptions—Discontent throughout the North—General conditions—A letter from a citizen of Baltimore—Letter from a citizen of New York.

**O**N the morning of May 5th, General Butterfield sent the following report to the President: "General Hooker is not at this moment able, from pressing duties, to write of the condition of affairs. He deems it his duty that you should be fully and correctly advised. He has intrusted it to me. These are my words, not his.

Of his plans you were fully aware. The cavalry as yet learned, have failed in executing their orders. Averell's division returned; nothing done; loss of 2 or 3 men. Buford's Regulars not heard from. General Sedgwick failed in the execution of his orders, and was compelled to retire, and crossed the river at Bank's Ford last night; his losses not known.

The First, Third, Fifth, Eleventh, Twelfth and two divisions of the Second Corps are now on south bank of Rappahannock, intrenched between Hunting Run and Scott's Dam.

Trains and artillery reserve on north bank of Rappa-

hannock. Position is strong, but circumstances, which in time will be fully explained, make it expedient, in the general's judgment, that he should retire from this position to the north bank of the Rappahannock for his defensible position.

Among these is danger to his communication by possibility of enemy crossing river on our right flank and imperiling this army, with present departure of two years and nine months' troops constantly weakening him.

The nature of the country in which we are prevents moving in such a way as to find or judge position or movements of enemy. He may cross to-night, but hopes to be attacked in this position."

On the 6th, the President telegraphed to General Hooker as follows: "We have, through General Dix, the contents of Richmond papers of the 5th. General Dix's dispatch in full is going to you by Captain Fox of the Navy. The substance is, General Lee's dispatch of the 3d (Sunday), claiming that he had beaten you, and that you were then retreating across the Rappahannock, distinctly stating that two of Longstreet's divisions fought you on Saturday, and that General E. F. Paxton was killed, Stonewall Jackson severely wounded, and Generals Hutt and A. P. Hill slightly wounded.

The Richmond papers also stated, upon what authority not mentioned, that our cavalry have been at Ashland, Hanover Court House, and other points, destroying several locomotives and a good deal of other property, and all the railroad bridges to within 5 miles of Richmond."

Later, the same day, the President again telegraphed: "Just as I had telegraphed you contents of Richmond papers, showing that our cavalry has not failed, I received General Butterfield's of 11 a. m. yesterday.

This with the great rain of yesterday and last night,

securing your right flank, I think puts a new face upon your case; but you must be the judge."

General Hooker, the same afternoon replied to the President as follows: "Have this moment returned to camp. On my way received your telegrams of 11 a. m. and 12.30. The army had previously recrossed the river, and was on its return to camp. As it had none of its trains of supplies with it, I deemed this advisable.

Above, I saw no way of giving the enemy a general battle with the prospect of success which I desire.

Not to exceed three corps, all told, of my troops have been engaged. For the whole to go in, there is a better place nearer at hand. Will write you at length to-night. Am glad to hear that a portion of the cavalry have at length turned up. One portion did nothing."

On the 7th of May, Secretary Stanton addressed the following letter to General Burnside at Cincinnati; similar letters were also sent to all the prominent generals of the different armies as well as the governors of the several states, to wit: "The President and General-in-Chief have just returned from the Army of the Potomac. The principal operation of General Hooker failed, but there has been no serious disaster to the organization and efficiency of the army.

It is now occupying its former position on the Rappahannock, having recrossed the river without any loss in the movement. Not more than one third of General Hooker's force was engaged. General Stoneman's operations have been a brilliant success. A part of his force advanced to within 2 miles of Richmond, and the enemy's communications have been cut in every direction.

The Army of the Potomac will speedily resume offensive operations."

On the same date, the President wrote the following letter to General Hooker:



Edwin M. Stanton





“My dear sir: The recent movement of your army is ended without effecting its object, except, perhaps some important breakings of the enemy’s communications. What next?

If possible, I would be very glad of another movement early enough to give us some benefit from the fact of the enemy’s communication being broken; but neither for this reason or any other do I wish anything done in desperation or rashness. An early movement would also help to supersede the bad moral effect of the recent one, which is said to be considerably injurious.

Have you already in your mind a plan wholly or partially formed? If you have, prosecute it without interference from me. If you have not, please inform me, so that I, incompetent as I may be, can try and assist in the formation of some plan for the army.”

Secretary Stanton also sent him the following letter of encouragement: “Richmond papers of Tuesday received at this department are full of accounts of the panic and destruction accomplished by Stoneman.

From the several papers, and the statement of General Stoughton, just arrived, among other facts, appear:

1. That a portion of Stoneman’s force was within 2 miles of Richmond on Monday. . . . General Stoughton reports that there was not at that time a single soldier in Richmond.

2. The road was torn up at various points, and General Stoughton says the canal broken, but the papers assert it was not broken.

3. Stoneman’s force is represented to be divided into detachments, operating in different directions, and producing great panic everywhere in that region. Other details are given at great length, but the above are the principal points.

The result at Chancellorsville does not seem to have

produced any panic. Gold has only risen 6 per cent. in New York, and at the close to-day had gone down 4.

The public confidence seems to remain unshaken in the belief of your ultimate success."

To the letter of the President, General Hooker returned the following answer:

"I have the honor to acknowledge your communication of this date, and in answer have to state that I do not deem it expedient to suspend operations on this line, from the reverse we have experienced in endeavoring to extricate the army from its present position.

If in the first effort we failed, it was not for want of strength or conduct of the small number of the troops actually engaged, but from a cause which could not be foreseen, and could not be provided against. After its occurrence, the chances of success were so much lessened that I felt that another plan might be adopted in place of that we were engaged in, which would be more certain in its results.

At all events, a failure would not involve a disaster, while in the other case it was certain to follow the absence of success. I may add that this consideration almost wholly determined me in ordering the army to return to its old camp.

As to the best time for renewing our advance upon the enemy, I can only decide after an opportunity has been afforded to learn the feeling of the troops.

They should not be discouraged or depressed, for it was no fault of theirs (if I may except one corps) that our last efforts were not crowned with glorious victory. I suppose details are not wanted of me at this time. I have decided in my own mind the plan to be adopted in our next effort, if it should be your wish to have one made. It has this to recommend it; it will be one in which the opera-

tions of all the corps, unless it be a part of the cavalry, will be within my personal supervision.”

In pursuance of an inquiry made by General Hooker of the Secretary of War on May 9th, as to whether he had “received any late news from Yorktown,” and saying that he was “extremely anxious to know what damage three regiments of dragoons did to the Aquia and Richmond Railroad after they were detached from Stoneman’s column;” the President telegraphed to General Dix that, “It is very important for Hooker to know exactly what damage is done to the railroads at all points between Fredericksburg and Richmond. As yet we have no word as to whether the crossings of the North and South Anna, or any of them, have been touched. . . . You readily perceive why this information is desired. I suppose Kilpatrick or Davis can tell. Please ascertain fully what was done, and what is the present condition, as near as you can, and advise me at once.”

In response to this dispatch of the President, General Dix replied: “Mr. Ould says neither of the two bridges over the South Anna nor the bridge over the North Anna was destroyed. The railroad communication is uninterrupted. . . .”

In a dispatch from General King at Yorktown to General Halleck under date of May 8th, that officer reports the result of Col. Kilpatrick’s part in the recent cavalry raid as follows: “Colonel Kilpatrick with his regiment (the Harris Light Cavalry) and the rest of the Twelfth Illinois has just arrived at Gloucester Point, opposite this fort.

They burned the bridges over the Chickahominy; destroyed three large trains of provisions in the rear of Lee’s Army; drove in the rebel pickets to within 2 miles of Richmond, and have lost only 1 lieutenant and 30 men, having captured and paroled upward of 300 prisoners.

Among the prisoners was an aide to General Winder,

who was captured with his escort far within the intrenchments outside of Richmond. This cavalry has marched nearly 200 miles since the 3d of May; were inside of the fortifications of Richmond on the 4th; burned all the stores at Aylett's Station, on the Mattaponi, on the 5th; destroyed all the ferries over the Pamunkey and Mattaponi, and a large commissary depot near and above Tappahannock, and came here in good condition.

They deserve great credit for what they have done. It is one of the finest feats of the war."

The general result of General Stoneman's expedition however, was unsatisfactory and displeasing to General Hooker, and one of the consequences of his displeasure was an order relieving General Averell from his command of one of the cavalry divisions.

In a report made to Secretary Stanton May 10th, General Hooker says: "From the most reliable information I have been able to gather, railroad communication between Fredericksburg and Richmond, by direct route, was interrupted but for one day. The bridges of importance appear to have remained untouched.

With the exception of Kilpatrick's operations, the raid does not appear to have amounted to much. However, some reports have yet to come in.

My instructions appear to have been entirely disregarded by General Stoneman. I shall know particulars soon.

Please inform me what force is at West Point. What is General Peck doing, or expected to do? The bulk of Longstreet's army is reported to be at City Point, within easy supporting distance to Lee's army on my resuming operations."

May 13th, General Hooker sent the following report to President Lincoln: "My movements have been a little delayed by the withdrawal of many of the two-years' and

nine months' regiments, and those whose time is not already up it will be expedient to leave on this side of the river.

This reduction imposes upon me the necessity of partial reorganization. My marching force of infantry is cut down to about 80,000, while I have artillery for an army of more than double that number.

It has always been out of proportion, considering the character of the country we have to campaign in, and I shall be more efficient by leaving at least one-half of it in depot. In addition, Stoneman's cavalry returned to camp day before yesterday, and will require a day or two more to be in readiness to resume operations.

I know that you are impatient, and I know that I am, but my impatience must not be indulged at the expense of dearest interests. I am informed that the bulk of Longstreet's force is in Richmond. With the facilities at hand, he can readily transfer it to Lee's army, and no doubt will do so if Lee should fight and fall back, as he will try to do.

The enemy's camps are reported to me as being more numerous than before our last movement, but of this I have no positive information. They probably have about the same number of troops as before the last battle, but with these and Longstreet's they are much my superior, besides having the advantage of acting on the defensive, which, in this country, can scarcely be estimated.

I hear nothing of Peck's movements and of the force at West Point, which is too small to be of much importance in the general movement. If it is expected that Peck will be able to keep Longstreet's force in and about Richmond, I should be informed of it, and if not, a reserve infantry force of 25,000 should be placed at my disposal in this vicinity.

I merely state this for your information, not that I

know even that you have such a force, or, if you have, that you would be disposed to make use of it in this way. I only desire that you should be informed of my views.

In my opinion, the major part of the troops on the Upper Potomac, in and around Washington and Baltimore, are out of position, and if great results are expected from the approaching movement, every man and vessel at the disposal of the Government should be assigned their posts. I hope to be able to commence my movement tomorrow, but this must not be spoken of to anyone. Is it asking too much to inquire your opinion of my Orders No. 49?

Jackson is dead, and Lee beats McClellan in his untruthful bulletins."

The "Orders No. 49" referred to by General Hooker, were congratulatory orders to his army issued May 6th, in which he says: "The major-general commanding tenders to this army his congratulations on its achievements of the last seven days. If it has not accomplished all that was expected, the reasons are well known to the army. It is sufficient to say they were of a character not to be prevented by human sagacity or resource. . . .

By our celerity and secrecy of movement, our advance and passage of the rivers were undisputed, and on our withdrawal not a rebel ventured to follow. . . .

We have taken from the enemy 5,000 prisoners; captured and brought off seven pieces of artillery, fifteen colors; placed hors de combat 18,000 of his chosen troops; destroyed his depots filled with vast amounts of stores; deranged his communications; captured prisoners within the fortifications of his capitol, and filled his country with fear and consternation. . . ."

The President was exceedingly anxious for another forward movement of the army. On May 13th he telegraphed for General Hooker to come up and see him at Washing-

ton, and on the following day he addressed him the following letter :

“My dear sir: When I wrote on the 7th, I had an impression that possibly by an early movement you could get some advantage from the supposed facts that the enemy’s communications were disturbed and that he was somewhat deranged in position.

That idea has now passed away, the enemy having re-established his communications, regained his positions, and actually received re-enforcements. It does not now appear probable to me that you can gain anything by an early renewal of the attempt to cross the Rappahannock.

I therefore shall not complain if you do no more for a time than to keep the enemy at bay, and out of other mischief by menaces and occasional cavalry raids, if practicable, and to put your own army in good condition again.

Still, if in your own clear judgment you can renew the attack successfully, I do not mean to restrain you. Bearing upon this last point I must tell you that I have some painful intimations that some of your corps and division commanders are not giving you their entire confidence.

This would be ruinous, if true, and you should therefore, first of all, ascertain the real facts beyond all possibility of doubt.”

On May 18th, in response to inquiries made by the Secretary of War, General Halleck submitted to him the following report: “Sir: In compliance with your verbal directions of yesterday, to ascertain the number of troops which could be spared from the Department of Washington to re-enforce the Army of the Potomac in case of necessity, I have the honor to report as follows :

“The whole number of troops for duty in this  
department is 32,982



Deduct those in camps of convalescents and distribution	1,177
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And we have for military duty	31,805
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The Secretary will remember the number of troops deemed necessary for the defense of Washington by the corps commanders when the Army of the Potomac left to operate upon the Peninsula.

The Board of Defense, ordered by the War Department in October last, reported that the line of works (37 miles in length) required for their defense a force of 25,000, besides a force of 3,000 cavalry, for scouts and outpost duty. These estimates do not include the city garrisons for guarding the public stores and buildings, and for police duty.

. . . By comparing the estimates of the corps commanders of the Army of the Potomac and of the Board of Defense with the foregoing statement, it will be seen that the troops now available for the defenses of Washington, exclusive of the movable corps, are less than one-half, and, including that corps, only about two-thirds of those estimates. . . .

None of the troops guarding the Baltimore Railroad and the Potomac River can be safely withdrawn, except in case of extreme emergency. . . .

If the Army of the Potomac should cross the Rappahannock above Fredericksburg, this force could be moved out to co-operate as a reserve. If that army should cross at or below Fredericksburg, it would, in my opinion, be exceedingly hazardous to remove this force from the vicinity of Washington. . . .

If that army should cross the Rappahannock and win a victory there would be no apprehensions for the safety of Maryland and Washington. If it should be defeated, then there would be good cause for such apprehensions.

But judging the future from the past, there is likely to be a third contingency, that is, that the Army of the Potomac may for some time remain inactive.

It is proper to consider the consequences of this inactivity. In that case, Lee's army will have three plans from which to choose:

1. To cross the Rappahannock, attack Hooker's army, and risk the result of a general battle. Lee is as prudent as able, and I do not think he will run this risk.

2. To make a demonstration on Washington, Maryland, or Harper's Ferry, and seek to regain possession of Norfolk. This is by no means improbable.

3. To make a feint upon Norfolk, and a real movement in force on Washington, Maryland, or Harper's Ferry. Such an operation, with an active army and an energetic commander, in the position now occupied by the Army of the Potomac, would be exceedingly hazardous. Nevertheless it may be attempted, as Lee's army can move with much greater rapidity than ours.

It is also very probable that Lee will maneuver so as to leave us in doubt what his real intentions are. While he makes demonstrations in both directions, we shall probably know his real intentions only after the blow is actually struck.

Under these circumstances, I think it is my duty to urge the retention of the present force in Washington or its vicinity.

When I visited Falmouth with the President, I informed General Hooker (in the presence of the President) what troops we had here, and told him that, in my opinion, he could calculate upon no re-enforcements from this place, unless upon the line of the Upper Rappahannock. He then said, most emphatically, that he had all the troops he wished, and all he could use with advantage. He also said that, notwithstanding the losses of the battle of Chancel-

lorsville and the discharge of troops whose services were about expiring, he would have left about 100,000 men, which was all he could employ to advantage.

It is proper to remark in this place that General Hooker has never estimated Lee's forces over 70,000 men. Others, who have had the best opportunities of observation, do not think they have exceeded 60,000. Nevertheless they have defeated very superior numbers on our side.

It may be mortifying to do so, nevertheless it is our duty to provide for the contingency of a defeat upon a decisive point, notwithstanding the fact that we concentrated superior forces upon that point. It is now conceded that most of Longstreet's force did not arrive in time to take part in the battle of Chancellorsville. A part of these are probably now in Richmond, to guard that place from General Dix's forces at West Point.

I deem it proper to state here that I have no information in regard to the intended movements of the Army of the Potomac.

General Hooker reports directly to the President, and receives instructions directly from him. I was not informed by General Hooker when, where, or how he intended to operate when he crossed to fight the battle of Chancellorsville.

It is a military rule that when a subordinate officer reports to and receives instructions from a superior, no one of intermediate rank can interfere. Under present circumstances, I think it would be improper for me to interfere in any of General Hooker's plans or movements. All I know in regard to them is, that he told me he intended to make some movement immediately

Whatever that movement may be, I shall assist him to the best of my ability and means."

While the Army of the Potomac remained thus inactive,

the rebel forces were again becoming very aggressive and troublesome. The Government had exerted its full strength in its efforts to put down the rebellion; its armies had been equipped and maintained on a scale, and at a cost, never before equalled, and yet, thus far, had been unable to successfully cope with an army apparently without resources, composed largely of ragged, ill-fed, and unwilling conscripts.

It had finally become necessary to enforce the unpopular conscription laws, and, under these discouraging conditions a feeling of great anxiety pervaded the Government, while much uneasiness and discontent became manifest throughout the North.

Some idea of the general conditions, and of the state of feeling at this time prevailing through the country, will be conveyed by the following letters.

On May 20th, 1863, the following communication was addressed to Secretary Stanton by L. Thomas Prince of Baltimore.

“Respected Sir: Pardon the liberty I have taken in addressing you, but I hope my motives will be a sufficient excuse.

I have been informed by one who seems to be pretty well versed in the affairs of rebeldom, that the rebels intend to invade Maryland, and endeavor to capture Baltimore and Washington. He states that this will be done in about three weeks unless something should be done to frustrate their intended movement.

The reasons for this movement by the rebels are these, viz:

1. They think that General Hooker's army has been thinned by the troops that have returned home, and is consequently in a weak condition.

2. They are of the opinion that a large proportion of the army around Washington has been sent to re-enforce

General Hooker, thus leaving Washington in a defenseless condition.

3. The near approach of the conscription act has caused those in one State who are hostile to the Government to write to the rebel Government for aid to rid them of the conscription law.

These are the hopes of the rebel Government, and I earnestly pray that their unholy and traitorous plans may fail.

Their present policy is to invade all the border States, if possible, and thus kill off the conscription act.

The person who gave me this information is a rebel, but a relative of mine (of which I am truly sorry). He also informed me of the late rebel raid in Western Virginia three months before it took place, and I informed General Schenck of the fact.

From my personal observations I am satisfied that the traitors in our midst have free intercourse with the rebel Government, and are fully versed in all their plans. Some of them make their brags that Maryland will be free before three weeks.

This information may not be worth anything, and yet may be of vital importance. If it should be the means of defeating their hellish plans, I will be doubly paid, but when they take Baltimore they will find it a heap of ashes. This is the fixed determination of the Union men here.

Under date of May 21st the following letter was addressed to General Halleck, by "John Paenter," of New York City:

"Sir: There is no doubt whatever that the rebels are preparing to invade Washington and Baltimore very soon, and if they cannot take Washington they say that they are sure of Baltimore with all its stores.

This programme, decided upon, some time ago, since

the defeat of Hooker, they now seem to think cannot fail. They will soon get men enough from other departments, they think, to overwhelm the Union forces. The great depletion of our ranks by the expiration of so many thousands' terms of service adds vastly to their chances.

Will not something be done speedily to diminish their chances? Is the Government going to sit down and let them carry out their plans, or study about it until too late? It will be too late to call upon the Northern militia when the foe begins the invasion. It must be done at once, if done at all. It takes time and a great while to collect 50,000 men, the least number certainly that should be called for. It is said here in the papers that the Governor of Pennsylvania has offered this number to garrison Washington until the conscripts are ready, and that they were accepted. If so, why is not a movement commenced to gather or collect them?

These delays in action have ever ruined us up to this time. There are too many to consult, too many to debate the questions presented. Active action only can save us. Can the Government be induced to act, or wake up, as is constantly asked? Will not Major General Halleck make an effort to save the Capital?"

## CHAPTER XXII

The difficulties and perils surrounding the Government—The tremendous strain on its head—Hooker reports the rebel army preparing for a forward movement—Uncertainty regarding its movements—He asks for Stahel's Cavalry to make an attack on them—Halleck opposes the removal of the cavalry from its present service—A letter from a secret service man—Hooker reports the enemy being re-enforced—He surmises their intentions—He expects to be required to make a quick movement and asks the views of the government regarding a proposed plan of attack—The President's letter—His suggestions and opinion—Halleck's opinion—Gen. Pleasanton cripples the enemy at Brandy Station—Hooker asks consent to move at once upon Richmond—The President's dispatch—He objects to a southward move while Lee is north—Hooker alters his lines—Lee's army moving northward—Winchester and Martinsburg besieged—Hooker's letter to the President—Invasion Lee's purpose—An act of desperation—Hooker's suggestion's.

**A** LAS! the country at large but little understood or realized the many difficulties, at this period surrounding the Government on all sides; dangers from foes without and traitors within. Nor, of the anxious care and tremendous strain imposed on its head, in the constant and unremitting efforts made to avert or overcome them.

The easiest thing in the world to do is to criticise and find fault, or to suggest remedies for evils; it is not however, at all times easy or practicable to apply them.

On May 27th General Hooker reported to Secretary Stanton: " . . . it seems that the enemy will soon be in motion. It was derived from deserters, but I place a good deal of confidence in it." And again, on the following day he telegraphed: "It has been impossible for me to give any information concerning the movements of the enemy at all satisfactory I have had several men

over the river, but as they do not return, I conclude that they have been captured.

The enemy's camps are as numerous and as well filled as ever. It was reported to me this morning by General Gregg that the enemy's cavalry had made their appearance in the vicinity of Warrenton; on the strength of which I have ordered onto that line Buford's division, to drive them across the river, and to keep them there, and, if necessary, I will send up additional forces. . . .

In the event a forward movement should be contemplated by the enemy, and he should have been re-enforced by the army from Charleston, I am in doubt as to the direction he will take, but probably the one of last year, however desperate it may appear. . . . You may rest assured that important movements are being made, and, in my opinion, it is necessary for every one to be watchful.

The enemy has all of his cavalry force (five brigades) collected at Culpeper and Jefferson. This would indicate a movement in the direction of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, and this it is my duty to look after.

If Stoneman had not almost destroyed one-half of my serviceable cavalry force, I would pitch into him in his camps, and would now, if General Stahel's cavalry were with me for a few days.

Please send this to the President."

In reply to this dispatch, Secretary Stanton telegraphed him that, having submitted his telegram to the President, and to Generals Halleck and Henitzelman, General Halleck reported as follows: "There is no other cavalry force about Washington than that of General Stahel, which is now engaged on scouting duty toward Bull Run Mountains, and in picketing Bull Run and Occoquan Rivers.

If it be removed, there will be no force in front to give



notice of enemy's raids on Alexandria or Washington."

The following letter dated at Winchester, May 30th, and addressed to Major General Milroy by "Michael Graham," will not be uninteresting as foreshadowing coming events. It was as follows:

"Sir: From all the information I can receive since yesterday morning, the rebels are collecting a large force of guerrillas, bushwhackers, and cavalry in the counties of Culpeper, Rappahannock, and Fanquier.

I have had an interview with Colonel L. T. Moore of Winchester, who was a colonel of a rebel infantry regiment, but who was wounded at the first battle of Bull Run, and is now out of the service.

He has great confidence in me, and thinks I am a rebel at heart, as I pretended to be once in his presence.

He says that Lee's army has been re-enforced by all of Longstreet's command, and also by forces from other commands from North Carolina and South Carolina. He also says that the greater part of Jones' command has gone over to Culpeper to assist Lee and that the balance will follow.

He also says that Lee has a train of wagons seven miles long, all loaded with pontoon bridges, and he likewise states that it is Lee's intention to cross the Rappahannock River above and below at Rappahannock Station with his whole force, and throw his army between Hooker and Washington, and advance toward Manassas or Fairfax, choose his own ground, draw Hooker after him; i. e., he will draw Hooker out of his present position, and give him fight in Fanquier, Stafford or Prince William Counties.

Quite likely it is his design to draw them on to the old Bull Run battle-ground again. If he should defeat Hooker in a pitched battle, he will supply himself with everything he needs in the way of horses, supplies, etc., and he will

be so encouraged that he will pitch again for Leesburg, cross the Potomac, and once more try his fortunes in Maryland.

Colonel Moore was a lawyer by profession before the war. He is a man of vast experience, and is a rebel of the strongest dye.

Lee will risk all in this fight. They will collect all their guerrilla bands and all their forces in Virginia, and prepare for a grand struggle, and that struggle is to defeat Hooker and his army.

In crossing the Rappahannock and throwing themselves into Fanquier, Stafford, Prince William Counties, they will threaten Washington, Alexandria, and Maryland by that move.

That move will draw Hooker out from Falmouth or Stafford. Lee will wheel around and give him fight. If Lee should be defeated in that battle, it is all up with him and Jeff Davis, but in my opinion he will gather and center all the force in Virginia, North and South Carolina in this fight, and if he should defeat Hooker, the fate of Maryland is sealed.

Should Lee be whipped, he would get the remnant of his army out again. There will be stirring times on hand. Let the Government leaders be apprised of the rebel movement, so that they will not be taken unexpectedly. This information Moore has received from one who is on Lee's staff, whose name is Colton (?) I believe. . .

The rebels have sent all their winter baggage away to Richmond, so that they may not be incumbered' with unnecessary baggage. The rebels in this move will leave Richmond defenseless. Their whole wagon' train they will leave in the neighborhood of the Rapidan, in Orange County."

The above letter was forwarded to Washington with the following indorsement of General Milroy: "Respectfully

forwarded for the information and suggestions contained. Graham is one of my shrewdest and most reliable secret service men; was with General Banks most of the time last year, and is known, I believe, to the Secretary of War and General Halleck."

While Lee's army was busily manouvering, preparatory to an aggressive forward movement, the Army of the Potomac was kept in a state of anxious suspense, and except for the efforts made to locate the wily enemy, divine his purpose, or thwart his movements, remained inactive.

On the 5th of June General Hooker sent the following dispatch to the President: "Yesterday morning appearances indicated that during the night the enemy had broken up a few of his camps and abandoned them. These changes were observed on the right of his line, in the vicinity of Hamilton's Crossing.

So far as I was enabled to judge, from all my means of information, it was impossible for me to determine satisfactorily whether this movement had merely been a change of camps . . . but, taken in connection with the fact that some deserters came in from the divisions of Hood and Pickett, I conclude that those divisions had been brought to the front from their late positions at Gordonsville and Taylorsville, and that this could be for no other purpose but to enable the enemy to move up the river, with a view to the execution of a movement similar to that of Lee's last year.

He must either have it in mind to cross the Upper Potomac, or to throw his army between mine and Washington, in case I am correct in my conjecture. To accomplish either, he must have been greatly re-enforced, and if making this movement, the fair presumption is that he has been by the troops from Charleston. Of this I have

no evidence further than that furnished me by Major-General Dix, that they had come from Richmond. . . .

As I am liable to be called on to make a movement with the utmost promptitude, I desire that I may be informed as early as practicable of the views of the Government concerning this army.

Under instructions from the Major-General commanding the army, dated January 31, I am instructed to keep "in view always the importance of covering Washington and Harper's Ferry, either directly or by so operating as to be able to punish any force of the enemy sent against them." In the event the enemy should move, as I almost anticipate he will, the head of his column will probably be headed toward the Potomac, via Gordonsville or Culpeper, while the rear will rest on Fredericksburg.

After giving the subject my best reflection, I am of opinion that it is my duty to pitch into his rear, although in so doing the head of his column may reach Warrenton before I can return. Will it be within the spirit of my instructions to do so?

In view of these contemplated movements of the enemy, I cannot too forcibly impress upon the mind of His Excellency the President, the necessity of having one commander for all of the troops whose operations can have an influence on those of Lee's army. Under the present system, all independent commanders are in ignorance of the movements of the others; at least such is my situation.

I trust that I may not be considered in the way to this arrangement, as it is a position I do not desire, and only suggest it, as I feel the necessity for concert as well as vigorous action.

It is necessary for me to say this much that my motives may not be misunderstood."

On the same day, the President made reply to General

Hooker as follows: "Yours of to day was received an hour ago. So much of professional military skill is requisite to answer it, that I have turned the task over to General Halleck. He promises to perform it with his utmost care.

I have but one idea which I think worth suggesting to you, and that is, in case you find Lee coming to the north of the Rappahannock, I would by no means cross to the south of it. If he should leave a rear force at Fredericksburg, tempting you to fall upon it, it would fight in intrenchments and have you at disadvantage, and so, man for man, worst you at that point, while his main force would in some way be getting an advantage of you northward.

In one word, I would not take any risk of being entangled upon the river, like an ox jumped half over a fence and liable to be torn by dogs front and rear, without a fair chance to gore one way or kick the other.

If Lee would come to my side of the river, I would keep on the same side and fight him or act on the defense according as might be my estimate of his strength relative to my own. But these are mere suggestions which I desire to be controlled by the judgment of yourself and General Halleck."

General Halleck's answer to Hooker's dispatch, was on practically the same lines as was that of the President's. Among other things he said that, while his movements would of course, in great measure depend upon those of Lee, it would "seem perilous to permit Lee's main force to move upon the Potomac while your army is attacking an intrenched position on the other side of the Rappahannock," and, "there is another contingency not altogether improbable—that Lee will seek to hold you in check, with his main force, while a strong force will be detached for a raid into Maryland and Pennsylvania.

The main force of the enemy in North Carolina have probably come north, but I think all available troops in South Carolina and Georgia have probably been sent to re-enforce Johnston in Mississippi. . . . Lee will probably move light and rapidly. Your moveable force should be prepared to do the same."

On the 10th of June, General Hooker sent the following dispatch to the President:

"Mr. President: General Pleasonton, by the telegram forwarded to the major-general commanding the army this morning, reports that he had an affair with the rebel cavalry yesterday near Brandy Station, which resulted in crippling him so much that he will have to abandon his contemplated raid into Maryland, which was to have started this morning.

I am not so certain that the raid will be abandoned from this cause. It may delay the departure a few days. I shall leave the cavalry, which is all that I have mounted, where they are, near Bealeton, with instructions to resist the passage of the river by the enemy's forces. If to effect this he should bring up a considerable force of infantry, that will so much weaken him in my front that I have good reason to believe that I can throw a sufficient force over the river to compel the enemy to abandon his present position.

If it should be the intention to send a heavy column of infantry to accompany the cavalry on the proposed raid, he can leave nothing behind to interpose any serious obstacle to my rapid advance on Richmond.

I am not satisfied of his intention in this respect, but from certain movements in their corps I cannot regard it as altogether improbable. If it should be found to be the case, will it not promote the true interest of the cause for me to march to Richmond at once?

From there all the disposable part of this army can be

thrown to any threatened point north of the Potomac at short notice, and, until they can reach their destination, a sufficiency of troops can be collected to check, if not to stop his invasion. If left to operate from my own judgment, with my present information, I do not hesitate to say that I should adopt this course as being the most speedy and certain mode of giving the rebellion a mortal blow. I desire that you will give it your reflection.

At present the enemy has one corps of infantry at Gordonsville, with the advance at Culpeper, with the manifest tendency of other corps to drift in that direction. I now have two bridges across the Rappahannock, ready to spring over the river below Fredericksburg, and it is this, I believe, that causes the enemy to hesitate in moving forward. . . .

From information, which I deem reliable, the only troops remaining in Richmond is the provost guard, 1,500 and all the troops between here and there are brought well to the front.

It would be incalculable service to this army to be transferred to some more remote point from Washington and Alexandria. The stampedes in those towns, gotten up, no doubt, by people in the rebel interest, have their influence on my men, for many of them have no means of knowing whether they are with or without cause. They think there must be some fire where there is so much smoke."

The President immediately sent the following reply:

"Your long dispatch of to-day is just received. If left to me I would not go south of Rappahannock upon Lee's moving north of it.

If you had Richmond invested to-day, you would not be able to take it in twenty days; meanwhile your communications, and with them your army, would be ruined. I think Lee's army, and not Richmond, is your sure objective point.

If he comes toward the Upper Potomac, follow on his flank and on his inside track, shortening your lines while he lengthens his. Fight him, too, when opportunity offers. If he stays where he is, fret him and fret him."

General Halleck likewise sent him on the following day this dispatch:

"The President has just referred to me your telegram and his reply of yesterday, with directions to say to you whether or not I agree with him. I do so fully."

June 13th, General Hooker made the following report to General Halleck: "All my sources of information confirm the statement that Longstreet's and Ewell's corps have passed through Culpeper and Sperryville, toward the Valley.

The instructions of the President, approved by yourself, and your original letter of instructions, compel me, in view of this movement of the enemy, to transfer the operations of this army from the line of the Aquia to the Orange and Alexandria Railroad.

Accordingly, directions have been given for the First, Third, Fifth and Eleventh Corps to rendezvous at Manassas Junction with the cavalry. The Second, Sixth and Twelfth, with the Reserve Artillery, after covering the withdrawal of Government property from depots, have been directed to march to Dumfries, and from thence to be governed by the movements of the enemy, the object being to bring the two wings together as far in advance on that line as the movements of the enemy will justify.

The corps will be withdrawn from their positions on the river to-night, the line being held by pickets until the proper time arrives for their withdrawal. To-morrow p. m., my headquarters will be at Dumfries.

The next day, he telegraphed from Dumfries: "At 3 p. m. Major General Hancock informs me that the rebel troops opposite Franklin's Crossing are moving up the



river, on the Plank road, in a continuous column. Major General Hancock covers the withdrawal of the forces and property at that point. No effort has been made to force the passage of the Rappahannock, excepting at Banks' Ford."

On the 14th, the President sent him this dispatch:

"So far as we can make out here, the enemy have Milroy surrounded at Winchester and Tyler at Martinsburg. If they could hold out a few days, could you help them?"

If the head of Lee's army is at Martinsburg and the tail of it on the Plank road between Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, the animal must be very slim somewhere. Could you not break him?"

General Hooker, this day sent two dispatches to the President. In his first one he said: "I have reason to believe that Longstreet's and the greater part of Ewell's corps marched from Culpeper, on the Sperryville road, on Sunday last (7th), and that a column, which occupied four hours in passing, followed on Thursday.

If this was the case, the head of the column has had time to reach Winchester, and if it is a movement for invasion, it is a fair presumption to conclude that the bulk of his cavalry is with him. The enemy has in this column not less than between 70,000 and 80,000 men.

A. P. Hill's corps, of about 30,000 is still on the south side of the Rappahannock, and General Hancock has just informed me that present appearances indicate that he intends to force the passage of the river in the morning. His troops have all been halted at and below Bank's Ford.

\* \* \*

The First Corps is at Kettle Run; the Second on the Rappahannock; the Third and Fifth at Catlett's Station; the Sixth at Potomac Creek; the Eleventh at Centreville, and the Twelfth at Dumfries to-night. The Second will

probably withdraw, the First march to Manassas, and the Sixth to Stafford Court House during the night.”

His second dispatch was as follows: “Has anything further been heard from Winchester? Will the President allow me to inquire if it is his opinion that Winchester is surrounded by the rebel forces? I make this inquiry for the reason that General I. R. Trimble was recently assigned, in orders, to the command of that district, and it is not known what command he had, unless his old one, which had Louisiana regiments in it, and it was in Jackson’s new Ewell’s corps.

I do not feel like making a move for an enemy until I am satisfied as to his whereabouts. To proceed to Winchester and have him make his appearance elsewhere, would subject me to ridicule. With this feeling, unless otherwise directed, I feel it my duty to proceed to execute the movements indicated on yesterday.

I will not however issue my order of march until the last moment, in the hope that further information may be received.”

On the 15th the President telegraphed General Hooker: “The facts are now known here that Winchester and Martinsburg were both besieged yesterday. The troops from Martinsburg have got into Harper’s Ferry without loss. Those from Winchester are also in, having lost in killed, and wounded, and missing about one-third of their number. Of course, the enemy holds both places, and I think the report is authentic that he is crossing the Potomac at Williamsport. We have not heard of his yet appearing at Harper’s Ferry or on the river anywhere below. I would like to hear from you.”

At 10 o’clock that night General Hooker sent the following dispatch to the President: “Your dispatch, 8.30, received. My dispatch to General Halleck this morning shows my position to-night. With regard to the enemy,

your dispatch is more conclusive than any I have received. I now feel that invasion is his settled purpose. If so, he has more to accomplish, but with more hazard, by striking an easterly direction after crossing than a northerly one.

It seems to me that he will be more likely to go north, and to incline to the west. He can have no design to look after his rear. It is an act of desperation on his part, no matter in what force he moves. It will kill copper-headism in the North.

I do not know that my opinion as to the duty of this army in the case is wanted; if it should be, you know that I will be happy to give it. I have heard nothing of the movements of the enemy to-day, excepting that he has not attempted to follow me across the Rappahannock.

I have only heard that all of A. P. Hill's forces moved up the river this morning, in the direction of Culpepper. If it should be determined for me to make a movement in pursuit, which I am not prepared to recommend at this time, I may possibly be able to move some corps to-morrow, and can reach the point of the enemy's crossing in advance of A. P. Hill.

If I should move at once, he would probably wait until his forces are concentrated. If they are moving toward Maryland, I can better fight them there than make a running fight. If they come up in front of Washington, I can threaten and cut their communications, and Dix can be re-enforced from the south to act on their rear.

I could not sit still and have them turn my right. My sources of information could not successfully cover such an extent of country as their movements indicate. I add these as suggestions for your consideration."

On the morning of the 16th General Hooker telegraphed the President: "It appears to me from General Couch's dispatch of last night, received this a. m., that

nearly all the cavalry of the Army of the Potomac should at once be sent into Maryland by the most direct route. General Stahel has an abundance to perform all cavalry duty that will be required south of the Potomac. I merely make the suggestion.

If any considerable body of enemy's infantry should be thrown across the Potomac, they will probably take the direction of his advance pickets, and in that event it seems to me that a heavy column of ours should be thrown as speedily as possible across the river at Harper's Ferry, while another should be thrown over the most direct line covering Baltimore and Philadelphia.

I only speak with reference to this army, as I know nothing of the location or numbers of troops at the disposal of the Government elsewhere."

## CHAPTER XXIII

Gen. Hooker's dispatch to the President—The strained relations with Halleck inimical to success—He is anxious to act and asks instructions—The superior advantages possessed by the enemy—Their security and the government's danger—The acts of newspaper correspondents a constant source of complaint and a menace to success—A question regarding the nature of army operations—Relations with Halleck becoming acrimonious—Hooker reports having given orders for a vigorous movement—Halleck disclaims having given him orders—The President interposes to remove misunderstanding—The prevailing conditions—A big stampede—Hooker makes a report to Halleck—Ewell in Pennsylvania—A conflict of authority—Hooker asks for the arrest of General Slough—He reports his inferiority in strength and asks for troops from Harper's Ferry—Their presence there of "no earthly account" and "but a bait for the rebels"—His request refused—He declares his inability to comply with his instructions with the means at his disposal and asks to be relieved—Hooker relieved and General Meade appointed to the command—Halleck's letter to Meade—Is given unlimited authority to do as he likes—Meade's acceptance—The privileges refused to Hooker voluntarily given to Meade—Depredations of the rebel army—The eve of Gettysburg.

**I**N a later dispatch to the President, General Hooker thus says: "Please accept my suggestions in regard to what should be done in the spirit with which they were given. They were suggestions merely, for I have not the data necessary to form an enlightened opinion on the case. Upon general principles, I thought those were the movements to make.

You have long been aware, Mr. President, that I have not enjoyed the confidence of the major-general commanding the army, and I can assure you so long as this continues we may look in vain for success, especially as future operations will require our relations to be more dependent upon each other than heretofore.

It may be possible now to move to prevent a junction of A. P. Hill's corps with those of Ewell and Longstreet. If so, please let instructions to that effect be given me.

As will appear to you, the chances for my doing this are much smaller than when I was on the Rappahannock, for, if he should hold the pass stoutly, he can cause me delay.

You can depend upon it, we can never discover the whereabouts of the enemy, or divine his intentions, so long as he fills the country with a cloud of cavalry. We must break through that to find him."

What seems most strange and inexplicable, is the apparent ease and safety with which the enemy were enabled to move about at will, and at the same time entirely obscure their movements. Probably the best explanation to be afforded for these conditions lies in the fact of their having all to gain, and practically nothing to lose in the struggle, and, were thus warranted in assuming hazardous risks, which, under other conditions would be entirely impracticable.

One undoubted advantage which they possessed, was their almost unbounded facilities for obtaining immediate knowledge of nearly everything transpiring in the North, and of all important movements taking place in the army.

When it is understood that Washington was filled with rebel spies and sympathizers, and that nearly every northern State, and Canada, swarmed with copperheads and traitors, it is not so surprising that the enemy were enabled to successfully elude pursuit, or avoid serious opposition to their movements.

The acts of newspaper correspondents were a cause of constant complaint by the several army commanders, of which the following dispatch sent to General Halleck on June 19th by General Hooker, is but one illustration: "I have just been furnished with an extract from the New York Herald of yesterday concerning the late movements of this army. So long as the newspapers continue to give publicity to our movements, we must not expect to gain

any advantage over our adversaries. Is there no way of stopping it?

I can suppress the circulation of this paper within my lines, but I cannot prevent their reaching it to the enemy. We could well afford to give millions of money for like information of the enemy ”

With the Government, the nature of the operations of the army had assumed very much the character of a game of chess; while the theory of General Hooker, and his proposed plan of operations seem entirely feasible, and would undoubtedly have been the proper ones to have pursued at an earlier stage of the war, it is a question on which there can be an honest difference of opinion, whether or not in the present instance they would have been practicable; even should their execution have proved successful.

Doubtless the view taken by the Government and which prompted its action in the matter, was the possibility of exchanging Washington for Richmond.

The relations existing between Generals Hooker and Halleck—heretofore not very confidential and friendly—were constantly becoming still more strained and acrimonious as will be apparent in the succeeding dispatches and correspondence. On June 16th, General Halleck sent the following telegram to General Hooker: “There is now no doubt that the enemy is surrounding Harper’s Ferry, but in what force I have no information.

General Schenck says our force there is much less than before reported, and cannot hold out very long. He wished to know whether he may expect relief. He can hope for none excepting from your army.”

On the same evening General Hooker replied to him as follows: “In compliance with your directions, I shall march to the relief of Harper’s Ferry. I put my column again in motion at 3 a. m. to-morrow.

I expect to reach there in two days, and, if possible, earlier. The partial rest of to-day was not lost, being necessary to recruit from forced and heavy marches and fill up supplies.

My headquarters at Farrall (?) Station to-morrow night."

He also sent the following dispatch to the President: "My orders are out to march at 3 o'clock to-morrow morning. It will likely be one of vigor and power. I am prepared to move without communications with any place for ten days. I hope to reach my objective point before the arrival of Hill's Corps, should it be moving in that direction. If I do not know this fact, I will shortly, but of information to the north of the Potomac I really have nothing.

I wish it might be made the duty of some person in the telegraph office in Washington to keep me informed of the enemy's movements in Maryland."

The same night General Halleck replied to General Hooker's telegram with the following dispatch:

"I have given no directions for your army to move to Harper's Ferry. I have advised the movement of a force, sufficiently strong to meet Longstreet on Leesburg, to ascertain where the enemy is, and then move to the relief of Harper's Ferry, or elsewhere, as circumstances might require. With the remainder of your force in proper position to support this, I want you to push out your cavalry to ascertain something definite about the enemy.

You are in command of the Army of the Potomac, and will make the particular dispositions as you deem proper. I shall only indicate the objects to be aimed at.

We have no positive information of any large force against Harper's Ferry, and it cannot be known whether it will be necessary to go there until you can feel the enemy and ascertain his whereabouts."



The same day the President also telegraphed General Hooker: "To remove all misunderstanding, I now place you in the strict military relation to General Halleck of a commander of the armies to the general-in-chief of all the armies. I have not intended differently, but it seems to be differently understood.

I shall direct him to give you orders and you to obey them."

The following dispatches will afford some idea of the prevailing conditions at this time.

On the night of June 16th General Hooker sent the following telegram to Secretary Stanton:

"If General Cadwalader has gone to Pennsylvania, please request him to send me information of the rebel movements to the south of there. Also please have the newspapers announce that I am moving on to the James River line. I will mask my real movements in these parts."

To this, the Secretary replied as follows: "General Cadwalader has not gone to Pennsylvania, but is here waiting for orders. You shall be kept posted on all information received here as to enemy's movements, but must exercise your own judgment as to its credibility.

The very demon of lying seems to be about these times, and generals will have to be broken for ignorance before they will take the trouble to find out the truth of reports."

On the 18th, General Halleck telegraphed General Hooker as follows: "I can get no information of the enemy other than that sent to you. Rumors from Pennsylvania are too confused and contradictory to be relied on.

Officers and citizens are on a big stampede. They are asking me why does not General Hooker tell where Lee's army is; he is nearest to it. There are numerous suppositions and theories, but all is yet mere conjecture.

I only hope for positive information from your front. General Heintzelman has a signal line to Sugar Loaf Mountain, and is directed to send you all the information he obtains. General Kelley is observing the passes west of the Shenandoah, and will give you, through General Schenck, all information he can get. He is very reliable.”

On the 24th General Hooker made the following report to General Halleck: “The aspect of the enemy is not much changed from yesterday. Ewell, I conclude, is over the river, and is now up the country, I suppose, for purposes of plunder. The yeomanry of that district should be able to check any extended advance of that column, and protect themselves from their aggression.

Of the troops that marched to the river at Shepherds-town yesterday, I cannot learn that any have crossed, and as soon as I do I shall commence moving, myself, and, indeed, am preparing my new acquisitions for that event.

General French is now on his way to Harper’s Ferry, and I have given directions for the force at Poolesville to march and report to him, and also for all of Stahel’s Cavalry, and, if I can do it without attracting observation, I shall send over a corps or two from here, in order, if possible, to sever Ewell from the balance of the rebel army, in case he should make a protracted sojourn with his Pennsylvania neighbors. If the enemy should conclude not to throw any additional force over the river, I desire to make Washington secure, and, with all the force I can muster, strike for his line of retreat in the direction of Richmond.

I cannot learn the strength of Heintzelman’s and Schenck’s commands, nor where they are stationed, and hence I send my chief of staff to Washington and Baltimore to ascertain, and also to start out a column of about 15,000 men on the National road as far as Frederick City.

In any contingency, whether of an advance or retreat of

the enemy, the defense of Washington or Baltimore, this amount of force should be there, and they should be held in readiness to march, which fact I will not be able to know until I put them on the road. I will send the best officers I have to command this body. I desire that instructions may be given to Generals Heintzelman and Schenck to direct their commands to obey promptly any orders they may receive from me.

Last evening the colonel commanding at Poolesville responded to his orders to march that he did not belong to my command, but would refer his orders to General Heintzelman. Such delays may bring us reverses.

When these instructions are given, I shall not be necessitated to repeat orders to any part of my command to march on the enemy. Allow me to suggest that the new troops arriving in Baltimore and Washington be at once put in the defenses, and the old ones, excepting those serving with the artillery, be put in marching condition.

If this should be done quickly, I think we may anticipate glorious results from the recent movement of the enemy, whether he should determine to advance or retreat.

I request that my orders be sent me to-day, for outside of the Army of the Potomac I don't know whether I am standing on my head or feet."

As may be inferred, General Hooker was exceedingly impatient to commence offensive operations against the enemy, and it was naturally extremely irritating to him to find himself tethered in his movements by having the validity of any of his orders questioned.

On the 25th he telegraphed to General Halleck, requesting that General Slough, the military governor of Alexandria, "be at once arrested," for refusing to the commander of one of the brigades in his command to recognize his (Hooker's) orders to move, saying "You will

find, I fear, when it is too late, that the effort to preserve departmental lines, will be fatal to the cause of the country."

On the 26th, he sent this dispatch to General Halleck: "Is there any reason why Maryland Heights should not be abandoned after the public stores and property are removed?"

I propose to visit the place (Harper's Ferry) to-morrow, on my way to Frederick, to satisfy myself on that point.

It must be borne in mind that I am here with a force inferior in numbers to that of the enemy, and must have every available man to use on the field."

General Halleck, in reply to this dispatch said: ". . . Maryland Heights have always been regarded as an important point to be held by us, and much expense and labor incurred in fortifying them. I cannot approve their abandonment, except in case of absolute necessity."

On the 27th General Hooker sent the following dispatch to General Halleck: "That there may be no misunderstanding as to my force, I would respectfully state that, including the portions of General Heintzelman's command, and General Schenck's, now with me, my whole force of enlisted men for duty will not exceed 105,000.

Fourteen batteries of the Artillery Reserve have been sent to Washington. Of General Abercrombie's force, one brigade has just been sent home from expiration of service, and the others go shortly. One brigade of General Crawford's force has not reported with it.

I state these facts that there may not be expected of me more than I have material to do with.

My headquarters at Frederick to-night. Three corps at Middletown, one corps at Knoxville, two at Frederick, and the remaining infantry corps very near there to-night."

Again on the same day, he sent the following: "I have received your telegram in regard to Harper's Ferry. I find 10,000 men here, in condition to take the field. Here they are of no earthly account.

They cannot defend a ford of the river, and, as far as Harper's Ferry is concerned, there is nothing of it. As for the fortifications, the work of the troops, they remain when the troops are withdrawn.

No enemy will ever take possession of them for them. This is my opinion. All the public property could have been secured to-night, and the troops marched to where they could have been of some service. Now they are but a bait for the rebels, should they return.

I beg that this may be presented to the Secretary of War and His Excellency the President."

Later in the day he telegraphed as follows:

"My original instructions require me to cover Harper's Ferry and Washington. I have now imposed upon me, in addition, an enemy in my front of more than my number.

I beg to be understood, respectfully, but firmly, that I am unable to comply with this condition with the means at my disposal, and earnestly request that I may at once be relieved from the position I occupy."

To this request, General Halleck returned the following answer: "Your application to be relieved from your present command is received.

As you were appointed to this command by the President, I have no power to relieve you. Your dispatch has been duly referred for Executive action."

On the same day were issued from the War Department the following:

"General Orders No. 194. By direction of the President, Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker is relieved from the command of the Army of the Potomac, and Maj. Gen. George

G. Meade is appointed to the command of that army, and of the troops temporarily assigned to duty with it.

By order of the Secretary of War."

The foregoing order was immediately transmitted to General Meade by General Halleck, accompanied with the following letter:

"General: You will receive with this the order of the President placing you in command of the Army of the Potomac.

Considering the circumstances, no one ever received a more important command; and I cannot doubt that you will fully justify the confidence which the Government has reposed in you.

You will not be hampered by any minute instructions from these headquarters. Your army is free to act as you may deem proper under the circumstances as they may arise. You will, however, keep in view the important fact that the Army of the Potomac is the covering army of Washington as well as the army of operation against the invading forces of the rebels.

You will, therefore, maneuver and fight in such a manner as to cover the Capital and also Baltimore, as far as circumstances will admit. Should General Lee move upon either of these places, it is expected that you will either anticipate him or arrive with him so as to give him battle.

All forces within the sphere of operations will be held subject to your orders.

Harper's Ferry and its garrison are under your direct orders.

You are authorized to remove from command, and to send from your army, any officer or other person you may deem proper, and to appoint to command as you may deem expedient.

In fine, general, you are intrusted with all the power

and authority which the President, the Secretary of War or the General-in-Chief can confer on you, and you may rely upon our full support.

You will keep me fully informed of all your movements, and the positions of your own troops and those of the enemy, so far as known.

I shall always be ready to advise and assist you to the utmost of my ability."

General Meade on the following day acknowledged the receipt of his order as follows:

"The order placing me in command of this army is received. As a soldier I obey it, and to the best of my ability will execute it.

Totally unexpected as it has been, and in ignorance of the exact condition of the troops and position of the enemy, I can only now say that it appears to me I must move toward the Susquehanna, keeping Washington and Baltimore well covered, and if the enemy is checked in his attempt to cross the Susquehanna, or if he turns toward Baltimore, to give him battle.

I would say that I trust every available man that can be spared will be sent to me, as from all accounts the enemy is in strong force.

So soon as I can post myself up, I will communicate more in detail."

On the 28th General Halleck sent the following telegram to General Meade: "The garrison at Harper's Ferry is under your orders. You can diminish it or increase it as you think the circumstances justify."

The very privilege and authority which General Hooker had solicited, the withholding of which from him had prompted his retirement, were, in increased measure, voluntarily granted to General Meade.

During this time, the rebels had taken possession of York in Pennsylvania, from which town they had exacted

a heavy tribute; had burned bridges on the Northern Central Railroad; advanced up to Carlisle, and Governor Curtin had called out the militia.

Thus terminated the campaign of General Hooker, and such were the conditions prevailing under which General Meade assumed command of the Army of the Potomac which three days later, was destined to engage in the crucial struggle of the war.









